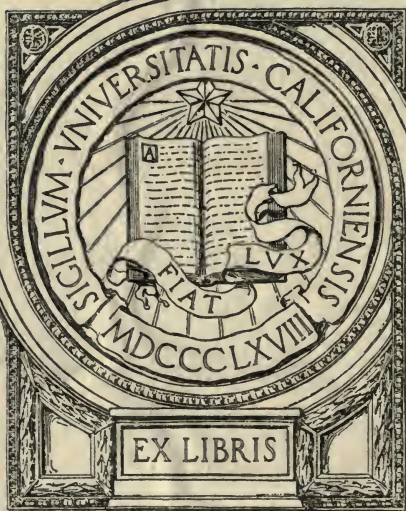


THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

H.M. HYNDMAN

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THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

BY

H. M. HYNDMAN

AUTHOR OF

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"THE ECONOMICS OF SOCIALISM," "THE COMMERCIAL
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PREFACE

I AM indebted to the courtesy of the proprietors of the *Fortnightly Review* and the *English Review* for permission to reprint five of the essays in this volume. The essay which appears as Chapter I, I wrote for the *English Review* in collaboration with my old friend Ernest Belfort Bax. I have removed the controversial portion of the article which appears as Chapter VII, inasmuch as Mr. Austin Harrison's paper in the *English Review*, to which it was a reply, is not reprinted.

H.M.H.

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THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

INTRODUCTION

WHEN very great changes take place suddenly, especially if they are forced upon a nation from above, there is always a probability that the people at large, for sheer lack of understanding, will resent and resist the alterations. This may easily happen, even when what has been done is advantageous to the community and is in consonance with the general course of national development. The danger of vigorous assault upon accomplished facts is the more serious when the population, whose political, economic, and social forms have thus been interfered with, is ill-educated, insufficiently organized, poorly trained, badly disciplined, and for the most part, crowded into large towns. In this case, I say, the likelihood of trouble arising increases, and the possibility of making an effective appeal to reason as against bitter prejudice, or well-meaning sentiment, is

lessened. Any economic strain, such as high prices of the necessities of life, which mean starvation for the very poor, will carry matters still farther towards something more vehement than the ordinary antagonism between capitalists and wage-earners, between the possessing and the disinherited class. The unprecedented war for national existence, involving unparalleled loss of life and unheard-of expenditure of wealth, will bring us face to face with problems more threatening to social peace than the war itself.

These are general considerations, the soundness of which would not be disputed if they dealt with affairs in the abstract. Only when they deal with a specific instance do contentions arise. Few among us can look at the present situation in Great Britain from a detached point of view. We are all so closely mixed up with and influenced by the national policy, in the course of our daily lives, that cool and careful reflection upon what is taking place is very rare. We are rubbing along in apathetic fashion as our fathers have done before us, and imagine that if we can manage our business and handle our disputes, misdemeanours, and crimes without anything in the shape of a codified law, we can equally well conduct our polity without anything approaching to a

Constitution. We are quite content to drift alike in calm and in storm. Those who are wise enough or fidgety enough to ask for a compass and to request that we should set a definite course are regarded, until the crash comes, as mere wiseacres and meddlers who would do better to attend to their own matters alone.

In this respect we had, so far, forgotten nothing and learnt nothing up to the beginning, or even well on into the middle, of the greatest war of all time. Then a Government of old Whigs and new Radicals suddenly discovered that even their favourite new plan of a nominated and highly paid bureaucracy could not successfully encounter the urgent necessities of a struggle to the death with a modern Empire whose entire peaceful as well as military life was organized and disciplined for the purposes of conquest in war. The tremendous scheme of Frederick the Great, devised and carried out in such wise that education, science, art, history, philosophy, and every department of intellectual and moral training should be cultivated, not for their own sake or for the uplifting of individuals and the community, but to increase the power of the State, under the control of his family and the militarist caste which it had created, and by which it was

upheld, found full realization for the first time in the opening years of the present century.

So remote was all this from the conceptions which had been fostered in the minds of the people of this island for at least a hundred and fifty years, that no warning from men who knew Germany well and had thoroughly studied its growth and its objects was heeded. The thing could not be. Mankind had outgrown the ideals of domination and the desires for universal empire. National organization might be replacing the old individualist tendencies, but the most civilized nation on the planet could not possibly aspire to achieve world-wide supremacy on land, on sea, in industrial competition, in trade, in peace, in war. Such was the talk I commonly heard. The attitude of Germany at The Hague and in the Moroccan imbroglio deceived our politicians and rulers in one direction: the pacific teachings and the political success of German Social-Democracy misled them in another. Nor did the admirable efficiency as well as the unscrupulous persistence of German merchants and financiers and manufacturers in the domain of trade competition open the eyes of our own bourgeoisie to the perils ahead. When our statesmen were being precisely informed they would neither tell the truth nor act upon it.

In 1911 Mr. Asquith and his Cabinet knew Germany had resolved upon war. In one State department alone, we were compelled as a nation to overrule the shortsighted incapacity of many of our men of affairs. The necessity for a very powerful navy, in the face of another powerful navy growing up to threaten Great Britain with starvation and invasion on the German side of the North Sea, was so obvious that, in spite of the agitation of Radicals and Labourists in favour of disarmament, a sufficient fleet in being was kept at the disposal of the country. Even so, it was more by accident than design that the nation had this fleet ready for battle in the right place at the critical time. But for this lucky chance, a large portion of Great Britain would probably have shared the fate of Belgium and our food supply would have been seriously endangered at the same time.

The most credulous and short-sighted pacifists now rejoice that their advice was rejected, and the majority of them have finally discarded their doctrines of misplaced confidence in favour of more Chauvinist methods, ashore and afloat, than those which I myself and others who were constantly adjuring the country to make ready against German attack, ever advocated.

The truth is, that, as matters stand, nations

large and small who fail to maintain themselves in a posture of defence and offence simply court insult and invite aggression. This is very clearly shown in the case of such a powerful country, potentially, as the United States of America. If the Great Republic were in possession of a sufficient army and an adequate navy, the attitude of the American President, alike towards our enemy Germany and 'our ally Japan, would be very different from what it now is. But, in consequence of a lack of preparation as fatuous as our own, the Americans find themselves unable to do more than protest, when their commercial interests are threatened by Japan in China, and are "too proud to fight" when their non-combatant fellow-citizens are drowned by the Germans in the Atlantic. I hope, though I can scarcely believe, that the world-wide war now being waged will preach peace more effectively than any pacifist among us can possibly do, and that international arbitration and simultaneous suppression of armaments will become the rule among all civilized peoples. But it is very evident that we have not yet come within hail of this happy period, and it is not easy to say how we can do so, when the country which is responsible for the present terrific struggle declares that it will respect

needs change of opinion

no treaties which it may enter into when peace is at last proclaimed.

Just and indeed inevitable as a war of defence against organized and educated barbarism must ever be, the democracy of each nation engaged in the strife bears the main burden of the conflict. The workers give their lives, their limbs, their domestic happiness, and their political freedom in order to ensure success. Yet, under any reasonable system, they have no antagonistic national interests to serve and nothing to gain by the most complete victory. The gratification of internecine hatreds engendered by race, religion, or profit cannot benefit themselves in their households now, or secure the betterment of their children after them.

They are all influenced, nevertheless, by these causes of difference. They accept the dictation of their economic masters. Yet from the peoples alone can come the certainty of continuous peace. The first step towards this most desirable end, therefore, is the existence of a thoroughly educated and organized democracy in each country. All talk of a Board of International Arbitration, or of an International Police Power to enforce its decisions, must be futile until nations themselves are ready to accept, and determined to

uphold, such a system. We are on the eve of revolution in several directions and in more than one country. Only by thorough preparation for the coming period will anarchy of the most serious character be avoided.

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND THE WAR

I

So remarkable has been the growth of Socialism in all civilized countries, and even in uneducated England, during the last thirty years that the attitude of the International Socialist Party in this unprecedented crisis is of considerable interest to the world at large as well as to Socialists themselves. We admit that the influence exerted by the Socialists to prevent, or limit the extension, of the war has been lamentably small. But it is equally certain that their enemies and their friends alike expected too much of them in this respect. In France, in Belgium, and in Great Britain, Socialism is certainly stronger than it was before the war began, being much more in touch with the mass of national feeling and tending to secure advantages of a practical description for the people which could not have

been obtained before. In Germany, no doubt, the representatives of Social-Democracy in the Reichstag did not take the course anticipated from their record. The majority supported the militarist party by voting for armaments at the commencement of the war, when, in the interest of Socialism generally, they should at least have abstained altogether. Moreover, when the war had begun, they apparently acquiesced in the attack on Belgium with hardly any protest.

Bitter, however, as is the animosity at the present time on both sides of the North Sea, it is unquestionable that Social-Democrats did good service to the cause of peace in the past. But their successes were still more impressive to others than they were to themselves. The huge vote of between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 men over twenty-five years of age, growing steadily at General Election after General Election; the round million of weekly subscribers to the party funds, the ninety daily self-supporting Social-Democratic newspapers, and the admirable organization of the party as a whole misled the world outside Germany (including Ministers for Foreign Affairs) into the belief that Socialists could do much more to preserve peace than proved in fact at all possible.

The old leaders of the German Socialist

party never at any time made this mistake. They knew that they could not stop, nor even postpone, war, when the dominant caste, had resolved upon making it. Bebel, Liebknecht, Singer, and others told me, a few years ago, that it was impossible for Social-Democrats to check mobilization, or to avert hostilities, whether the campaign was directed against France, or England, or Russia. The utmost they could do would be to enter a formal and vigorous protest—a very dangerous matter for the protesters. A definite refusal to obey the call to arms would be dealt with in such a manner as to throw back Socialism for a generation. Open resistance was out of the question. This opinion of the most influential German Socialists was published in England more than once, and never contradicted by them. But their statement was scarcely needed to show the truth. If the Social-Democrats had been able to stop war, obviously they were strong enough to take control in peace.

Still, for forty-four years, they did what they could. They protested against the war of 1870, and their leaders were imprisoned in consequence; they strove their utmost to prevent the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine; they resisted the military fury of the Junkers, as they denounced their reactionary finance; they

voted every year for the reduction of the expenditure on armaments and attacked the policy of menace at all their meetings. Quite recently, also, Karl Liebknecht, following in the footsteps of his great father (himself imprisoned times out of number) was incarcerated for exposing the infamies of Prussian militarist discipline. In this patriotic but dangerous work he was boldly seconded by the fiery Rosa Luxembourg, who has just been sent to prison for doing so. Throughout, the party denounced war upon France as a crime against civilization. The less we can excuse the panic which seized the majority of their Parliament men, when threatened by Russia, the more credit we should give to their previous efforts; and still more should we applaud those like Karl Liebknecht, Mehring, Ledebour, Clara Zetkin, Rosa Luxembourg, and Bernstein, who have remained true to the faith.

The rank and file of the party, after betrayal by their representatives, had no means of expressing their opinions. But, had Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel been living, we believe that fully half the members of the Social-Democracy would have declared that their views on aggressive warfare were unchanged. If there was no danger of this, why was all Germany kept so carefully in

the dark as to the objects and the progress of the war? Why have lies been the current coin of German officialism throughout? It is not necessary to conceal the truth from a nation that is eager for war! But war once entered upon with ruthless energy, it was almost impossible for hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of objectors to make their voices heard. Recall what occurred in Great Britain only fifteen years ago. Although it is probable that a majority of the inhabitants of this island were opposed to the war waged on behalf of international millionaires against the South African Republics, matters were so contrived by the English aggressors that those who publicly opposed that criminal and costly policy—I speak from personal experience—did so at serious risk to life and limb. It is far worse in Germany to-day, where the Prussian Junkers have absolute mastery, with martial law at their command.

Social-Democrats of all nationalities are necessarily vehement advocates of peace between the peoples. They know that there is no real economic antagonism between the workers of the world. Race, religion, greed of gain, obscure the true interests of the producers. Social-Democrats are, however, essentially Internationalists; meaning thereby that they strive

for universal understanding among nations to their common advantage. They are not in principle Anti-Nationalists; for that would imply them to be necessarily indifferent to national independence, because capitalism oppresses all alike. They recognize the right of every nationality to safeguard its own independence, or to free itself from foreign rule.

The sympathy of Socialists has always been with the conquered against the conquerors, with the small Powers against the great, with the weak against the strong. Moreover, at International Congress after International Congress, side by side with declarations in favour of peace, a resolution has been carried unanimously by the assembled delegates in favour of a National Democratic Citizen Force (or Armed Nation) to ensure effective national defence. Assuredly, therefore, Socialists cannot be honestly denounced either as peace-at-any-price men, or as Chauvinists. They oppose aggression, they resist attack, they help on emancipation. The action of Vaillant, Guesde, Sembat, Vandervelde, Anseele, Plechanoff, Pablo Iglesias, Charles Edward Russell, Herron, Walling, and many English Socialists may be fairly set off against the temporary backsliding of the weaker brethren in Berlin, who could not, as their forerunners did, distinguish between

a war of militarist aggression and a war of democratic defence.

To class Marx with Treitschke, Bernhardi, and the rest of the fire-eaters and professors is ludicrous. Marx, and with him Engels, was the most powerful opponent in Europe of all that German Prussianized militarism stands for. He loathed it and all its work, as he showed in his writings, in his conversation and by his actions. Engels, a more impulsive man than Marx, actually wanted to go over and render what aid he could to the French in the war of 1870, and Marx only dissuaded him by urging that his action would be misunderstood by the French themselves. Marx and Engels were strongly opposed to any policy which aimed at giving Germany, as organized in their day, a dominant position in Europe.¹ More than this, they attacked the influence of Prussia and Prussian methods as directly injurious to Germany itself, and as tending to crush down the real greatness of the German people. In practical politics of the day these great men may have

¹ A pamphlet by M. Laskine, written with the object of showing that the Social-Democrats of Germany were favourable to the Kaiser, gives extracts from the correspondence of Marx and Engels which are much more Chauvinist in thought and expression than I could have gathered from their general action.

made their mistakes ; but it is an outrage upon their memory to accuse them of having anything in common with the infuriate military and professorial fulminists of to-day.

True, Socialists work towards the period when, in a wider sphere, all nationalities will be absorbed as separate entities into the great Co-operative Commonwealth of Socialist Humanity,—just as, in the past, Tribes, ceasing to fight among themselves, were combined into a Confederation of Tribes or a People ; Cities, abandoning their internecine warfare, expanded into a Province ; and Provinces, within whose borders peace became the rule, consolidated themselves into the modern Nation-State. Though, also, armaments intended for use by one nation against another may be unavoidable in the competitive profit-making and commercial system of our day, with the attendant race hatreds inherited from the past, these antagonistic elements will disappear in the general co-operation of internationally organized industry and the universal peace of to-morrow. But the basic antagonisms to be resolved, before this ideal of the future can be realized, are the economic and class struggles, within each and every nation, mainly due to the system of production itself : not to the persistent efforts of each nation in turn for ex-

pansion, or domination, at the expense of other nations.

This great and terrible war has been forced upon the world by Prussian militarist ambition ; but this does not mean that Germany must be counted out in the progress of Socialism. Far from it. Notwithstanding her frightful mistakes, Germany, by reason of the superior education of her people, has probably advanced farther towards the solution of the problem of social revolution and social reconstruction than any other country. France gained her solid Republic by the German overthrow of the French Empire. It is within the bounds of possibility that Germany may attain to a still higher and more beneficial transformation when finally defeated by the Allies. "Revisionism" most certainly will not arrest the approaching change. Its influence has been greatly exaggerated, as I could easily demonstrate. It is enough to say here that the leader of that clever but unsuccessful sect of mild progressives has himself not only abjured his errors, but as a patriotic German sees no hope for the uplifting of his country save in the defeat of Prussian policy.

But Germans generally, being Germans, fail to understand that the immediate danger of themselves to other nations, handled as they are by

Prussian Junkers, looms larger and seems more directly hateful than the success of Russia allied with England and France. Muscovite Czarism may be warded off. The Prussian Goth is at the gate.

II

Speaking broadly, Socialists at the present time are, in most countries, divided into two camps. The minority favour the extreme doctrinaire dogma that all wars in modern times arise out of capitalism and capitalist antagonism, and that, therefore, Socialists should take no part in them whatever, even when national freedom and national independence are at stake. The majority, on the other hand, contend, and act upon the contention, that by no means all modern wars are capitalist wars, or due to capitalist antagonism, and that, even if they were, capitalism plus foreign militarist domination, or racial repression, is worse than domestic capitalism by itself. The former opinion is in opposition to the decisions of International Socialist Congresses: the latter is in accordance with them. The great Peace Congress held at Basle just before the Balkan uprisings made an imposing declaration in favour of universal peace. The workers of the world, as already said, have really no

antagonistic interests, if they understand their true position, and without their aid no war can be carried on. Sound as this may be in the abstract, when war, once breaks out, working men are quite ready to take sides, as we see, and to fight to a finish like other classes, and many an ardent pacifist in Great Britain yesterday is an ardent recruit or recruiting agent to-day. Nevertheless, though it is useless and even harmful to preach peace when there is no peace, Socialism will have a good deal to say when this war is over. It has made more progress in this island during the past twelve months than it did in the previous twelve years.

It is worth while, therefore, to study the exposition of scientific Socialism known as the materialistic interpretation of history of which we hear so much nowadays on both sides of the Atlantic. That this conception influences a growing number of thinkers is apparent.

I give the theory below, in the words of its chief promulgator, Karl Marx. Marx, apart from his analysis of capitalist production, which still holds the field in political economy, systematized, and provided a philosophic and historic groundwork for, the ideas popularly expounded years before he came to the front by the English Chartist leaders and the prin-

cial French agitators. These ideas comprised the class war, social antagonisms based upon economics, etc. It is his name, therefore, that is generally associated with the theory which he thus formulates himself:—

“In the social production of the environment of their life, human beings enter into certain necessary relations of production which are independent of their will, and correspond to a determinate stage of development of their material and productive forces. The totality of these relations of production form the economic structure of the society, the real basis upon which a judicial and political superstructure raises itself, and to which determinate forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of the material life of society conditions the socio-political and intellectual life process generally. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into contradiction with the existing relations of production, or, to speak in judicial language, with the conditions of property-holding, under which they have hitherto worked. When this is the case, the forms of development proper to the

productive forces become suddenly transformed into fetters for these forces. An epoch of social revolution is then entered upon. With the transformation of the economic basis, the whole immense superstructure sooner or later undergoes a complete bouleversement. In considering such revolutions as these, one must always distinguish between the material revolution in the economic conditions of production, and the judicial, political, religious, artistic, or philosophical—in short, the ideological form, in which mankind becomes aware of the conflict and under which it is fought out. Just as little as one can judge an individual by what he thinks of himself can we judge such a period of revolution from its own consciousness alone. On the contrary, we must rather explain this consciousness by the contradictions obtaining in the material life of the time, in the conflict existing between the social forms of production and the social relations of production. A social formation never passes away before all the productive forces immanent within it have had time to develop themselves, and new and higher relations of production never establish themselves before the material conditions of their existence have already been formed within the womb of the old society. Hence mankind only sets itself tasks that it can accomplish,

for if we consider the matter carefully we shall find that the problem to be solved never arises except where the material conditions of its solution are already present, or at least where they are already in process of realizing themselves. In their broader outlines, Oriental, classical, feudal, and modern modes of production may be designated as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society. The bourgeois relations of production are the last of the antagonistic forms of the social progress of production, antagonistic, not in the sense of individual antagonism, but of an antagonism arising out of the social conditions underlying the life of individuals. These are created by the productive forces developing themselves within the womb of bourgeois society, which forces create at the same time the material conditions for the resolution of the antagonism thus created. With the present social formation, therefore, the introductory period of the history of human society is closed."

Now, it is obvious, if we accept this as a complete summary of human development, that mankind in society is thereby reduced to a collection of merely sentient automata, unconsciously dominated, from generation to generation, by economic circumstances, outside

of their own cognition or control. Moreover, used in this sense, the word and the conception "materialist" or (perhaps better) "economic" assumes the attributes of a God, or First Cause. And, indeed, some of Marx's followers are quite content to ascribe to it such a power. That is to say, the materialist, which for them means the economic, factor devours all other factors in the long history of man in society, and proceeds onwards and upwards of its own motion and volition. Progress is assumed as one of the properties inherent in matter, giving forth of itself an impulse towards the modification of human environment. Hence all individual, as well as all social, improvement becomes virtually automatic.

The mental or psychologic factor is thus wholly eliminated. The inevitable rules society inevitably. Consciousness itself is nothing more than a special modification of the object of consciousness (i.e. of its own object!).¹ Similarly social advance is no more than an effort of highly organized matter to reach an unseen goal, in which effort mankind renders blind

¹ Consciousness as external perception which is the source and condition of our objectively known world is reduced as such to a *mere* effect or mode of that world—i.e. to a special set of its own impressions.—E. B. B.

assistance as a vitalized material agent. How or why progress, rather than stagnation or retrogression, should result from such uninfluenced material evolution, no attempt is made to explain.

There must, we suppose, be some charm to certain minds in this crushing down of active mentality. The simplicity of the theory is itself a perfect joy to searchers after the universal formula—the philosopher's stone—for the transmutation into theoretical certainty of all that is knowable. This key it is claimed opens up, lays bare, and explains every period of history in its innermost detail. The adjustment, also, of apparently irreconcilable historic developments to the theory, wholly regardless of more obvious reasons for what has taken place, possesses an attraction for the devotees of this materialist cult of abstraction, which transcends even the believer's delight in tracing "the finger of God" in every incident of life. Save that men of genuine ability, such as Karl Kautsky, the late Paul Lafargue, Morris Hillquit, and a few others, including from another side Robert Blatchford, accept this human automatism as a material revelation, it would not be worth while to expose the shortcomings of Marx's brilliant and pregnant generalization, when pushed to extremes.

What Marx overlooked, in the passage quoted, is that one factor of a complex synthesis cannot constitute reality: least of all can one aspect of one factor do so. The total material conditions, omitting the mental factor, are as purely abstract as the mind itself divorced from its material expression is abstract. Still more does the economic element by itself, severed from the other material conditions, become an abstraction: being, indeed, an abstraction of an abstraction. In the domain of social psychology, family, tribal, and personal feelings, internal and external perception, mental combinations, imagination, etc., all have their influence.

The last-named psychologic factor, in particular, often works in direct antagonism to material interests, both individual and social. The crudest superstitions have very greatly influenced human action, in many ways and in various directions. Even the profound belief in what, to the average modern mind, is an absurdity, such as "the Second Advent" of the Christ, which, by no possible perversion of ideas can be attributed to the economic forms, or the economic development, of the time, had a powerful influence upon the actions, as well as upon the teachings, of the early Christians. The hope of another world, with

its sempiternal happiness for disembodied spirits, brought about an indifference to this world with its material needs. This is common to all supernatural religions, when really believed in. Similar, and almost as widely spread, popular delusions, which also had no bearing whatsoever upon the material side of social life, have produced very serious effects upon men in society—effects which have extended over whole continents, and lasted for long periods.

Many historic situations, also, cannot possibly be explained by the comparatively simple formula of economic antagonisms, and the struggle of classes thence resulting. Granting that these class-struggles themselves were wholly due to the purely economic factor (of itself a very large concession), there were other desperate conflicts going on simultaneously, or successively, which had nothing at all to do with class warfare. The antagonisms of race, of religion, of custom, and so on, have brought about some of the most terrible conflagrations the world has ever seen. History bristles with illustrations of this truth. Can there be anything more absurd than to try to prove that the early movements of Mohammedanism or Peter the Hermit's Crusade are traceable, either directly or indirectly, to the economics of the

time? The attempt falls through of its own fatuity. Nevertheless, the long-drawn conflict extending over centuries which resulted from the growing power of the more recent Asiatic creed, Mohammedanism, and the furious assaults upon it of the older Asiatic religion, Christianity, greatly affected the future of the race. That economic interests arose out of and followed the initial religious antagonism may be true; but this does not in the least weaken the original contention: namely, that the antagonism was mainly psychologic and not economic. The Social-Democratic movement is itself a refutation of the purely materialistic theory; inasmuch as Germany, where economic conditions are less developed than in England or America, nevertheless, owing to psychologic causes, has organized that movement much more vigorously and capably than either of the other two countries.¹

¹ An even more striking instance is the advance of social-democracy in Finland. Here is a poor and very sparsely inhabited country, whose chief industries, tar and papermaking, only employ a very small number of the working population. The majority of Finns are peasants or farmers; yet for the last seven years the social-democratic vote has steadily increased, until its representatives comprise very nearly half of the whole elected assembly. Further, the majority of this vote is polled by the agricultural workers of Finland—peasants from remote farms and forests—living, under the most primitive conditions, upon a harsh and barren soil.

All wars are no more of necessity economic wars than all internal national conflicts are of necessity class struggles.

This is as true of modern wars as of the wars of history, and is particularly applicable to the greatest war the world has ever seen in which we, as a nation, are taking part to-day. That many wars of our time have been waged in the interest, real or supposed, of the capitalist class does not admit of dispute. Such wars are, in fact, so numerous that only the eager desire to make the economic theory *universally* valid could induce the fanatics of materialistic monism to insist upon bringing the present war within the limits of the same category. The wars in China, Burmah, South Africa, Morocco, Tonquin, Cochin China, Madagascar, Manchuria, Korea, Cuba, Tripoli, and the Philippines were undoubtedly all of them capitalist wars in the strict sense: wars, that is to say, whose primary object was to obtain an extension of trade and commerce, or to ensure the expansion of some financial scheme. On the other hand, the wars of emancipation, such as those of Italy and Hungary and the Balkan Principalities, cannot be brought under this head; nor can the wars of Germany against Austria and France.

The war between Great Britain, France, Russia, Servia, etc., against Germany and Austria-Hungary is likewise not a capitalist war in its origin.

III

The rise of Prussia to its present position of domination over Germany, and lately even over Austria, has, of course, been due to militarism. The history of Frederick the Great and his wars, in which he made defeats as fruitful as other generals made victories, shows that clearly enough; and when Prussia had recovered from Jena and Auerstadt, the tale was taken up by the reorganized army which, after Leipzig and Waterloo, became the most powerful engine of war on the continent of Europe. Nearly fifty years elapsed, however, before the successful campaigns of 1864, 1866, and 1870, against Denmark, Austria, and France, proved that the Prussian military system still preserved the organization and impetus given to it by Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, and that the lessons of thorough unscrupulousness in diplomacy, taught by the ablest of the Hohenzollerns, had not been lost upon Bismarck. From 1871 onwards, Prussianized Germany, by far the best-educated, and industrially and commercially the most progressive, country in Europe, with the enormous

advantage of her central position, was, consciously and unconsciously, making ready for her next advance. The policy of a good understanding with Russia, maintained for many years, to such an extent that, in foreign affairs, Berlin and St. Petersburg were almost one city, enabled Germany to feel secure against France, while she was devoting herself to the extension of her rural and urban powers of production. Never at any time did she neglect to keep her army in a posture of offence. All can now see the meaning of this.

Militarism is in no sense necessarily economic. But the strength of Germany for war was rapidly increased by her success in peace. From the date of the great financial crisis of 1874, and the consequent reorganization of her entire banking system, Germany entered upon that determined and well-thought-out attempt to attain pre-eminence in the trade and commerce of the world of which we have not yet seen the end. From 1878, when the German High Commissioner, von Rouleaux, stigmatized the exhibits of his countrymen as "cheap and nasty," special efforts were made to use the excellent education and admirable powers of organization of Germany in this field. The Government rendered official and financial help in both agriculture and manu-

facture. Scientific training, good and cheap before, was made cheaper and better each year. Railways were used, not to foster foreign competition, as in Great Britain, by excessive rates of home freight, but to give the greatest possible advantage to German industry in every department. In more than one rural district the railways were worked at an apparent loss, in order to foster home production, from which the nation derived far greater advantages than such apparent sacrifice entailed. The same system of State help was extended to shipping until the great German liners, one of which, indeed, was actually subsidized by England, were more than holding their own with the oldest and most celebrated British companies.

Protection, alike in agriculture and in manufacture, bound the whole Empire together in essentially Imperial bonds. Right or wrong in theory—which it is not here necessary to discuss—there can be no doubt whatever that this policy entirely changed the face of Germany, and rendered her our most formidable competitor in every market. Emigration, which had been proceeding on a vast scale, almost entirely ceased. The savings banks were overflowing with deposits. The position of the workers was greatly improved. Not only were German Colonies secured in Africa and Asia,

which were more trouble than they were worth, but very profitable commerce with our own Colonies and Dependencies was growing by leaps and bounds, at the expense of the out-of-date but self-satisfied commercialists of Old England. Hence arose a trade rivalry, against which we could not hope to contend successfully in the long run, except by a complete revolution in our methods of education and business, to which neither the Government nor the dominant class would consent.

This remarkable advance in Germany, also, was accompanied by the establishment of a system of banking, specially directed to the expansion of national industry and commerce: a system which was clever enough to use French accumulations, borrowed at a low rate of interest, through the German Jews who so largely controlled French financial institutions, in order still further to extend their own trade. It was an admirably organized attempt to conquer the world-market for commodities in which the Government, the banks, the manufacturers, and the shipowners all worked for the common cause. Meanwhile, both French and English financiers carefully played the game of their business opponents, and the great English banks devoted their attention chiefly to fostering speculation on the Stock Exchange

—a policy of which the Germans took advantage, just before the outbreak of war, to an extent not by any means as yet fully understood.

Thus, at the beginning of the year 1914, in spite of the withdrawal, since the Agadir affair, of very large amounts of French capital from the German market, Germany had attained to such a position that only the United States stood on a higher plane in regard to its future in the world of competitive commerce. And this great and increasing economic strength was, for war purposes, at the disposal of the Prussian militarists, if they succeeded in getting the upper hand in politics and foreign affairs.

The only party in Germany which was deeply interested in making war was this same Junker party and its militarist friends. They constituted the last military caste, as a caste, left in the world. They were being threatened on two sides. On the one hand, the great capitalists, with whom the Kaiser was more friendly than he was towards the Junkers, were gaining influence and power, aided by the State, in every direction. Fiscal protection against agricultural imports and control over the army did not compensate them for being thus supplanted at Court and in political

influence. Every year that passed made their position, as they thought, more insecure. Hence their endeavour to make their power felt in every household, and their growing determination to impress their superiority upon the mass of the people by almost unendurable arrogance and brutality, alike to soldiers under their command and to civilians who at any time might be at their mercy. Militarist policy only waited its opportunity to push ahead with vigour, and, in its desire to obtain for itself in the name of Germany (as its ablest writers admitted) the leadership and the domination of Europe, nothing was omitted from the necessary preparations which science could suggest or which material organization could provide. The incident of military ruffianism at Zabern, which horrified Europe, but left Prussia unmoved, was but a fair example of the tendency in one direction; the secretly built howitzers for the destruction of Belgian and French forts was a manifestation of the other. Only war was needed to give full outlet to both.¹

¹ Endeavours have been made of late, in more than one quarter, to confuse the exceptional militarist caste in Prussia with the military staffs and officers in Great Britain and other European countries. The difference, both politically, socially, and militarily, is very great. Nowhere, not even in Austria, where the power of the aristocracy over the army is quite bad

And war became the more necessary from the Junker point of view on account of that astounding growth of German Social-Democracy, to which we have already made reference. For German Social-Democracy, though in direct antagonism to German Capitalism, was even more menacing, or so it was thought, to German Militarism, and for that reason could rely to some extent upon support from the German lower middle-class and even from the great German capitalists. Neither of these sections had any love for the Junkers and their military caste, nor had they any desire for war. In fact, as quite probably the Kaiser himself and his more sober advisers saw clearly, Germany was gaining so much and so rapidly by her quiet but unceasing progress in peace that she could not possibly hope to obtain more by war without encountering desperate risks. Therefore, capitalists and people were at first dragged into hostilities by the military caste, whose policy had been systematically advocated among the "intellectuals" by the university professors for at least fifty years. This, consequently, is not a care-

enough, have the prejudices of a hereditary caste been so greatly strengthened and rendered so intolerable, by the irresponsible arrogance of military command, as in Prussia, and through Prussia, in Germany.

fully prepared war of capitalist aggression against rival capitalists. It is the final effort of Prussian militarism to retain its predominance at home by conquest and annexation abroad. The Junkers were losing ground: war might enable them to recover what they had lost and a great deal more. Therefore, foreign war was deliberately engineered in order to save the domestic situation. Hence the intrigues of this camarilla around the Kaiser and his family, as well as in every capital in Europe; hence the constant and at last successful efforts to embroil Austria and Russia against their will in the trouble arising out of the Serajevo assassination; hence the sudden attack upon Belgium as a preliminary to the crushing of France; hence also the miscalculation about the attitude of England, which the Junkers could not understand.

To the amazement of all foreign Socialists the German Social-Democrats supported the militarists, who were their worst enemies. Why? "Russia the enemy" was substituted for "England the enemy"—the cry since 1878—and Social-Democrats, like other Germans, were misled. Unfortunately, too, the English capitalist newspapers played into the hands of the German Chauvinists all over the Fatherland by starting an agitation, immediately on the

outbreak of war, for "the capture of German trade"; as if sheer capitalist greed on our side, and not the outrage upon Belgian neutrality, the attempt to immolate France, or even the necessity for defending the independence of Great Britain herself, was the real reason why this nation declared war upon Germany. The truth being, of course, that the capitalist class in Great Britain, native and foreign, was strongly on the side of peace. The grim irony of the thing is almost unprecedented in history.

Peace favoured the commercial expansion of Germany. Peace favoured the racial growth of the Slavs with Russia behind them. Peace favoured the consolidation and permanence of the French Republic. Peace favoured the general policy of Great Britain. Yet war was forced upon the world by the fear and the ambition of the only purely militarist and reactionary system left in Europe. Outside Germany, even the most rigid conscription does not engender a military caste of the nature it has created there. But Prussianized Germany, as represented by the Junkers, with Austria-Hungary trailing at her heels, was becoming more militarist every day.

Victory for such a power would inevitably bring about a long set-back, not only to

Socialism in Germany, but to democracy all over Europe. For that democracy, as well as Socialism, will be attacked and repressed if the Prusso-German army wins is apparent from what is already to be seen in Germany itself. Prussia, the headquarters of Junkerdom and militarism, bristles with reaction. Her political system and methods of election are entirely behind the times. So far, also, notwithstanding the great and growing power of Social-Democracy in Berlin and throughout Prussia, it has been found impossible to introduce reforms. Not only so, but reaction has gained ground in the South. In Saxony, where Social-Democracy had made most effective use of universal suffrage, that democratic right had actually been taken away from the people, and no effective protest was made by Social-Democrats against this high-handed action of the reactionary minority. As the Social-Democrat poll mounted up, at General Election after General Election, the Junkers openly threatened to suppress universal suffrage throughout the Empire in the same way. Should they win in war they will carry out this policy in peace, and the countries they conquer, annex, or put under tutelage will be subjected in like manner to the rule of the sabre. Culture is only useful in the minds of the Junkers in so far

as it enables them to dominate and oppress. Triumphant abroad, they will be the despots of Central, Western, and South-Eastern Europe.

Happily, this misfortune seems unlikely to befall humanity and civilization, including Germany herself. Prussianized Germany to-day, like Napoleonic France of a century ago, has raised against herself the most formidable combination the world has ever seen. Yet we have all had a narrow escape from at least her temporary success. The conspiracy against the independence and general freedom of all her neighbours was conducted with masterly ability and good fortune, up to the point when the tide was turned back on the Marne. German calculations were by no means so rash as some of us are now apt to imagine. If by far the greatest danger of modern times seems to be slowly passing away, this is due to the fact that her own policy has forced her enemies to fight with unheard-of resolution and patriotism. Let us hope that the defeat of Prussian militarism, to which we may confidently look forward at an earlier or later date, will be accompanied by the uprising of all that is really noblest in the German people, who have been made its dupes, its tools, and its victims. On the side of the Allies there is no ruthless hatred against Germany—though

that the wrongs done by her soldiery must be duly paid for is a sad consequence of the hideous barbarism which has disgraced her campaign—but when the war is over, that a new and greater Germany may again take a leading place in the ranks of great nations striving for human progress is the sincere desire of not a few of those who have been compelled for years past most vigorously to denounce and oppose her as a standing menace to Europe.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND NATIONALISM

ONE of the most remarkable contrasts in recent history is the condition of modern Germany in 1858 and its condition to-day. In the former year, as a lad of sixteen, I first made acquaintance with the Rhine and the provinces on its banks. The river was still at that time the river of the poets. The people who inhabited the towns and villages along its course, and dwelt in the beautiful valleys which run up from the stream, were all agriculturists of a kindly, simple character, whose behaviour to a young stranger travelling alone among them was invariably good-natured and courteous. The French wars of the Republic and Napoleon I were almost forgotten, the uprisings of 1848 had quieted down, the new war period had not begun. Austria and Prussia were, superficially at least, on very good terms. The great fortress of Mainz—it was still commonly known by its French name of Mayence—was

garrisoned by 15,000 Austrians and 15,000 Prussians.

There was, in fact, little or nothing to show at this period, nor in the first years of the following decade after Napoleon III's Italian campaign against Austria, that we were on the eve of a complete change in the distribution of power in Central Europe. The partial withdrawal of Austria from Italy in 1859, the overthrow of the Kingdom of Naples and the two Sicilies in 1860-61, the splendid but disastrous revolt of the Poles under Langiewicz, left that brilliant but unfortunate people as much oppressed and admired as ever, and France, with her New Year's Napoleonic Encyclical from the Tuileries, was still regarded as the leading Power of Europe, and maintained that doubtful influence for just upon another ten years.

The period of transformation, which we can all now see meant so much to us of to-day, began with the dastardly attack by Prussia and Austria combined upon little Denmark in 1864. No Englishman can read of the behaviour of our country at that juncture without shame. It would have been easy for Great Britain to have formed successfully a league of defence against the brigandage of the Germanic Powers, to have safeguarded

Denmark from dismemberment, and to have asserted the rights of small States and nationalities in Europe. But these were the days when our highest conception of policy was pusillanimous surrender and our duty to our neighbours consisted in prayer to the Almighty that they might turn their misfortunes to good account. So Schleswig-Holstein was duly appropriated by Prussia, while British trade was still mounting upwards by leaps and bounds in the peace we so carefully preserved.

Then followed the dispute between the two great Teutonic freebooters, which led to the critical campaign of 1866, when, thanks to Bismarck's amazing diplomatic coup, the Italian Alliance, Prussia won the leadership of Germany from Austria and became the most powerful State in Europe. The victory, however, was due far more to the absurd meddling of the old women in Council at Vienna with Benedek's strategy and tactics, and to the Italian diversion of some of the best Austrian troops from the main field of conflict to the Adige and the Po, than to either the brilliant military prowess of the Prussian troops or the effectiveness of their breech-loading rifles. It was a very narrow escape for the Berserker of Berlin, even as things stood, and the result might have been very

different had Austria (with her usual blundering taken as an inevitable factor in the case) remembered in war, as in diplomacy, Pozzo di Borgo's indispensable condition for success — *L'une après l'autre*. Less than half of the Archduke Albrecht's army, with General John in command, could easily have held the Italians in check, while the remainder would have crushed the divided Prussian armies north of the Alps.

But the what-might-have-beens of the past are as futile as they are fascinating. Speculations as to the consequences of Benedek's success are confronted by the realities which followed upon Moltke's victories. Within four years of Sadowa and Königgratz Austria had been cajoled into taking up the rôle of an indifferent or friendly spectator, while the diplomacy and strategy which had destroyed her leadership were turned with even more fatal effect against France. Unscrupulous and ruthless as was again the policy of Prussia, few regretted the downfall of the second French Empire, with its reactionary clericalism at home and its piratical assault upon Mexico abroad. The Gallic cock crowed too loud each 1st of January; and Europe was weary of a shoddy Imperialism which was crushing down all that made France of real value to the

world. But with the crowning victory of Sedan and the establishment of the French Republic an entirely new situation was created.

Then, if ever in her history, was the time for Great Britain to take up the cause of her old rival in grim earnest. The ruin of Republican France even for a time could not but be harmful to all that England ought to stand for. French influence, relieved of Imperial chauvinism and corruption, required strengthening rather than weakening. The two Western Powers together could make head against any attempt to revive the old Holy Alliance, which had done so much to check progress and blight freedom in Europe. Most unfortunately, England at this time had a vehemently pro-German Court, and her diplomacy was at the mercy of an agreeable incompetent as Foreign Secretary and a peace-at-any-price rhetorician as Prime Minister.

The United Kingdom stood by, therefore, while the French Republic was beaten by the Prussian armies, and France herself was bled mercilessly by the conqueror. Queen Victoria, Granville, and Gladstone by their pro-Prussian prejudices and general ineptitude, were directly responsible for bringing about the European conditions which led to the war of 1914. Had France been adequately supported by

England in the autumn of 1870, Austria and Italy could have called a halt to Prussia's victorious armies, and the Republic would, in all probability, never have been driven into the harmful Alliance with Russia. I regard the policy pursued in 1870 as the first cause of the present devastating war. It was no difficult matter even then to foresee that Prussia, especially if she maintained her friendly relations with Russia, would sooner or later become the dominant nation in Europe.

I have given already my reasons for holding the opinion that the present war is not, what so many believe it to be, a capitalist war. Nations go mad about other things than the mere lust to gain wealth. That, however, the Germanic Powers, and in particular Prussianized Germany, had resolved for many a long year to develop their strength at the expense of their neighbours does not now admit of dispute. The truth is admitted by the Kaiser, by other members of the Federal Council, and by the heads of the great German departments. This does not mean that all German or Austrian contentions have been directed to this end. But, even when in the right, both German and Austrian diplomacy have been conducted in such fashion as to put those nations in the wrong. Arrogance

is always as provocative as it is unwise. Thus in the matter of Morocco Germany was in the main right. Even the French Yellow Book shows that. But, sound as her views were in themselves, when she demanded the resignation of M. Delcassé at the point of the sword, she inflicted a humiliation upon France to no good purpose whatsoever.

Similarly, Austria could not be expected to continue the doubtful position she held in Bosnia and the Herzegovina. She had long since carried out the Treaty of Berlin—feet foremost: it was high time that fraudulent document should be decently buried. But when its immediate and sudden abrogation was thrust upon Russia, contrary to all diplomatic usage and in a singularly brutal way, it was again obvious that the parties to this unfortunate method of conducting international business were forcing an open door after a most unmannerly fashion. Behind these rough methods lay the conviction that Germany and Austria-Hungary, with Italy as their Ally, were strong enough to defy the public feeling of other nationalities whenever they saw fit to do so. Such a belief tended to embitter antagonisms of every kind.

Of these antagonisms, by no means the least important is that which exists between Teuton

and Slav. This antagonism is nowadays very marked indeed. It has, however, been going on for many hundred years, and is still assuming a more and more critical shape. The Slav is the advancing race. This too, in spite of German industry and German efficiency. About that there can be no doubt. In peace the Slav steadily gains ground. Whole districts in Austria, and on the borders of Germany, which were German a few years ago, had German names and used the German language, have now become Slav in every respect. Where the Slav abuts upon the German, he is to a large extent eating the German out—especially in the south-east of Europe. So bitter was the feeling in Vienna about this, that, just when war was being forced on Serbia by the Austrian Foreign Office, a Councillor in Vienna of very moderate views, and as a rule of calm expressions, wrote quite furiously to my wife on the subject.

This is, in effect, what he said: "Now is the time to crush and put an end to this Slav danger once for all, and to enable us to show that we Germans are the dominant race and intend to remain so. Everybody here is of one mind about this." Serbia was to be annihilated as a step towards placing

the whole of the Slavs of South-Eastern Europe under more thorough subjection to the Germans. If this was the reasoned judgment of a highly educated and capable man of high position in Vienna, what was the line taken by less thoughtful people? Beyond question that the Slavs must be "taught a lesson." It was fear underlying a sense of superiority which engendered this policy of "thorough." The "superior" race was being outfought in peace by the more prolific and less exigent people who were considered "inferior."

Such a policy, moreover, was no new thing, as Haase, the leader of the German Social-Democratic Party in the Reichstag, openly declared. For five-and-twenty years before the assassinations at Serajevo, said he, Austria had been doing her utmost to hamper and head back Serbia in every possible way. And this chiefly, if not entirely, from the racial point of view. Teuton against Slav. What was the argument put successfully to the Social-Democrats of Germany in order to justify the war? "Would you give way and allow Russia to come down and dominate us? You are bound to help us to defend our country against this terrible rising power of the Slavonic race which is coming forward in the Balkans and threatening Austria, and which by the building

up of an autonomous Poland, may render our position permanently insecure."

The Germans, feeling that their economic and bureaucratic hold on Russia was slipping from their grasp, cried out that emancipated Russia might overwhelm them. This bugbear of Russian aggression on Germany was worked up for the purposes of the militarist faction in Germany and Austria. But the Slavs on their side felt bitterly the oppression to which they were subjected wherever Germans got the upper hand, as well within as without the limits of Germany and Austria proper.

There is, for example, no more furious race antagonism in the world than that between Czech and German and Slovak and Magyar. At a Congress of our own party at Manchester two or three years ago, Habermeyer, one of the Social-Democrat delegates in the Hungarian Assembly, said to me: "My name is German, but I am Slav by race. You can have no idea of the position we hold in comparison with the German and the Magyar in Austria-Hungary. We are treated as serfs. Our education is neglected. Every department is starved. We are regarded as an inferior people. Yet we know that in some directions our qualifications are higher than those of the people who are dominating us and crushing us down."

That is the common feeling among them. At the International Socialist Congress of Copenhagen in 1910, when pacifism ruled, when the very idea of war declared by Germany for aggressive purposes was jeered at by the whole Congress, the Czech delegate from Bohemia stood up and vociferated the determination of himself and his fellow-Czechs never to combine in one Socialist organization with German Social-Democrats. "The Congress may say what it likes and do what it likes, but," he declared, "never will we make common brotherhood with them in a local organization." Teuton and Slav! Had the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the old International been celebrated at Vienna in 1914, as was intended, there would have been far more dangerous scenes than this.

The antagonism between German and Slav, Slav and German, is a conflict of ideas, of views of life, of conceptions of what ought to be: a struggle between the practical, vigorous, efficient, dominating element and the more poetical, sentimental, less logical, less disciplined, but still charming and admirable qualities of the other race. You may admire the one and despise the other; you may fear the one and like the other. But there exists the struggle of race, and unless full

account is taken of it, peaceable international action becomes impossible.

Similarly, between Frenchmen and Germans. The ideal of the French as a nation differs entirely from the ideal of the Germans as a nation. This may change as time goes on, and republican and democratic opinions spread. But, as matters stand to-day, the national conceptions are as antagonistic as the national institutions are different. I think mankind could better spare the Germans than the French: others hold the contrary view. But it is certain that much as they may hate one another to-day, both nations are needed for the advance of humanity.

It may even be said that there is less contrast between the views of Germans and Slavs than between Germans and French. The former, when freed from the militarist cult, have more in common with the dreamy quasi-philosophic strain of the Slav than with the logical, clear-cut conceptions and ideals of the French. Strange, however, is it to recall that the Borussians who were the forbears of the Prussians were Slavs, and that Bismarck von Schonhausen was a Slav himself.

And so I might go over the map of Europe and show that in any attempt to reorganize the faculties of civilized men, the element of

nationality must always be taken into account. Before the war Germans despised us English as decadent, apathetic, inefficient. "A fine nation but too fat," as Bismarck said. We have learnt from them and they have learnt from us during the war. It is a pity at least that we did not learn from them sooner in peace.

There is, then, race antagonism of the most formidable character, quite apart from any economic struggle or any national rivalry. And yet there is sufficient evidence that, even under the conditions of to-day, social advantage and personal liberty can harmonize all these various causes of difference, or bring them at least into the field of peaceful political conflict. Nearly every great nation to-day is compounded of a great variety of races and peoples. "The True-Born Englishman" is perhaps the most complex entity of the whole of them, as Daniel Defoe was careful to point out in the eighteenth century. Frenchmen look upon France as a country worth fighting for, and worth dying for. Yet can there be a greater contrast than that between the Norman and the man of the South?

We regard Italy, again, nowadays as one people. But the Neapolitan, the Calabrian, the Sicilian have little besides language in

common with the Lombards and the Piedmontese.

More interesting and noteworthy still are the cases of Switzerland, Belgium, and Bukovina. The Republic of Switzerland comprises several different races and languages. Yet, in spite of continuous efforts by the Germans to disrupt the country in the interest of Berlin, the people are well contented with their Federal Government and Cantonal Administration. A thoroughly democratic political Constitution, and, in the main, a community of social aims, enable them to maintain national unity, notwithstanding their difficult geographical position. There are wide differences of opinion, the class war between the capitalists and the wage-earners exists there as everywhere else; but so far they all contrive to manage their own business, and conduct peaceably their own referendums on affairs of crucial importance, whether German, French, or Italian be their language and personal nationality.

In Belgium the antagonism of race, language, and creed between the Flemish and the Walloons is so marked that the possibility of permanent coalescence would seem exceedingly doubtful. Yet, as Belgians have explained to me, proportional representation has averted

bitter conflicts, which might have led to civil war, and the factitious domination of the reactionary clerical party was being steadily fought down with political weapons, by the forces of progress, confident of the approaching victory of the cause. And all Belgians to-day are at one against the brutal Prussian invader. More telling still is the situation which existed in Bukovina, before the struggle of huge armies marching to and fro over the fields and homesteads of the unfortunate peasantry devastated that flourishing little province. There exist, side by side, seven or eight different races, with an equal number of different languages. Nevertheless, owing to their political and economic equality, the unexpected result of the policy of Joseph II, these various elements have lived together in unity, and Bukovina is, or but now was, a prosperous little place.

Thus, although it is as foolish to refuse to take account of race hatred as it is to ignore religious animosities, there are many countries around us where these causes of dissension are removed by intelligent popular policy. What is done with success on a small scale may be achieved on a large one. National and racial differences may be overcome when they are frankly recognized and sympatheti-

cally dealt with. Only when they are disregarded, or an attempt is foolishly made to override them, does any genuine international action become impossible. Economic Socialist bigotry, which pretends to lay down material rules for the guidance of all mankind, is as dangerous as religious bigotry, which tries to do the same in another sphere. To bring about international action after the war we must discard all theoretic international jargon during the war. To be a useful Internationalist a man must be a Nationalist first. I wonder how many years I have preached that truth in the Socialist movement? The solidarity of the human race must be achieved by national groupings, and can be achieved in no other way.

Unless those who strive for peace, disarmament, and international comity base their propaganda upon the facts of their own day, as well as upon their ideals of the future, they are powerless to influence the course of events. Democracy, publicity, and reference to an educated people on all matters of importance are essential to any real progress towards international action in the common interest of all nationalities. If for any reason one nation or Empire is preparing to make war upon its neighbours, it is worse than folly for the

statesmen of any neighbouring country to conceal that fact from the people who entrust them with the conduct of the national affairs.

Not to go farther back than 1911, Germany at that date had fully made up her mind to go to war within the next few years—it is now said that 1914 was the date fixed, and that is what I was informed myself from Germany on excellent authority. Our Government was well advised of all this. Whether Germany was right or wrong in thus preparing for her great attack upon France and Belgium and Russia and England is not the point. The Germanic Powers had made their decision: the British Government was aware of their decision. Yet at that time, 1911, in 1912, when Lord Haldane returned with his bogus peace assurances from Berlin, and again up to July 1914, we were persistently assured by the Prime Minister and the whole Cabinet that our relations with Germany had immensely improved, and were, in fact, never better. During the whole of this period, however, Sir Edward Grey was carrying on his secret and adventurous diplomacy with France and Russia, while no adequate preparations whatever were being made either to fulfil our obligations to Belgium—which the Government knew would be attacked—or to the Entente

Powers, who were justified in relying upon our support. Never was a nation more unscrupulously deceived by its most trusted servants than was Great Britain by Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Haldane, Mr. Churchill, and the entire Liberal Ministry, supported by its press, at the most dangerous crisis in its whole stirring history.

From the very start of the Socialist Movement in this island at the commencement of 1881, a strong protest has been raised against the entire system of secret diplomacy, which renders the people quite powerless to control its own affairs, and sacrifices hundreds of thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of money to greed for office and the pusillanimity of faction. Had England adopted a policy of internal preparation equal to the support of her policy of international secret diplomacy, had the Government told the full truth to the people and appealed to them for patriotic effort, not to make, but to avert, war—peace would have been maintained. As it was all who knew the facts and proclaimed them to their countrymen were contradicted and vilified, and Western Europe consequently escaped by a mere accident from being conquered by the Germanic Powers. Secret diplomacy is a curse to mankind. It has

been the function of a Liberal Government to prove it. We neither secured peace nor made ready for war!

Germans have taken and kept the lead since 1848 in the development of modern Socialism and Internationalism. This has been due to the eminent capacity of their theorists, and to the admirable organization and discipline set on foot by their practical men. Strange to say, the International combination, resulting largely from their efforts, has been twice upset by Germany herself, and in both cases by an attack upon France. The old "International" of 1864 was destroyed by the campaign of 1870-71. The new International of 1900 has been broken up by the rush upon Paris, which was all but successful in 1914. It is useless for the most peace-loving and international of mortals to imagine that relations between Germans, Austrians, and the peoples of the allied countries can be as friendly after the war as they were before. The whole policy of Europe has to be built up afresh. The methods of the Prussians in Belgium, France, and Poland will not be easily forgotten, still less forgiven. None the less civilization cannot permanently exclude 120,000,000 of people from intercourse, and it is absurd to think that France, Great Britain, and Russia can

permanently ostracize or boycott the Germanic Powers—no matter how completely their power for mischief in the future may be curtailed and portions of their present territory redistributed on racial and nationalist lines. We shall have to deal with Berlin and Hamburg, Vienna and Buda-Pesth as after the Napoleonic Wars and more recent misunderstandings we dealt with Rouen, Paris, and Lyons. We rightly shut our eyes to this to-day: but we shall have to open them wide to the facts to-morrow.

So, likewise, is it unwise to disregard the truth that we have been faced from the commencement with a choice of evils. There is not a democrat or a Socialist in the world who has not been and is not afraid of the growing power and influence of despotic Russia. From the Congress of Vienna in 1815, through the uprisings of 1848-9 onwards to the present day, Russia has been the mainstay of reaction on the Continent of Europe. Checked by the Japanese campaign, she speedily recovered her strength, and Finland, Poland, the Ukraine, and the Jews can tell us the use she has made of it. Dread of Russia more than hatred of hostilities animated the tremendous Peace Meeting held in Trafalgar Square on the eve of the war

to protest in favour of peace. All saw that, win or lose, the weakening of the Germanic Powers necessarily involved the eventual aggrandizement of Russia. The resolution submitted to that meeting, and carried at every platform, expressed, as I believe, the feeling at the time of the great mass of the people of the United Kingdom. Peace if in any way possible: avoidance of co-operation with Russia except in the last resort. It gave evidence of nothing short of national madness on the part of Germany and Austria, that within two or three days they had turned the whole nation furiously against them and had forced the workers of Great Britain, uninformed and unprepared, to throw in their lot with the Muscovite Czar, and rush to the recruiting stations to enlist, in numbers and with a fervour wholly unprecedented in all our long and stirring annals.

And the people were right, and are right to-day. All but an insignificant and ignorant minority are determined to put an end to Prussian militarism and Prussian arrogance, dominating Germany and forcing the hand of Austria, once for all. This Teutonic menace was more dangerous than the Russian danger. In all the affairs of life, when decision has been made and action has been entered upon,

it is essential to pull down the shutters on one side of the intellect. Discussion is at an end: determination takes up the tale. Victory for the Germanic Powers would be infinitely worse for civilization and progress than the victory of the Allies. That is why, in spite of terrific losses and unprecedented expenditure, the peoples of Western and Southern Europe now make common cause with Russia against the most formidable enemy of democracy and freedom which has burst forth upon the world since the Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople nearly five hundred years ago. He who wishes the end wills the means. And the means can be no other than those which are now being employed. The Great Alliance at this moment is fighting the fight of enfranchized nationality and liberty, not for Europe only, but for the world, and the United States themselves are being saved by the British fleet and the Allied armies from dangers which their state of pacifist unreadiness shows that their inhabitants do not comprehend. The victory of the Allies will mean, I am firmly convinced, a victory for democracy in Great Britain. Already a very different spirit is abroad among the workers from that which prevailed before the war. They are learning day in and day out that there is a war at

home as well as a war abroad, and that the German troops, whom they met in comradely fashion before the trenches last Christmas, have no real quarrel with them, as compared with the bitterness that both must feel against their respective masters at home. That feeling will grow. A complete success for the Allies will be even more valuable for the Germans than for ourselves. We shall need the democracy of Germany in years to come in order to withstand that very same development of Russian power which now is working with us to clear aggressive militarism out of the path of Western Europe. That is why, though it would be contemptible to discuss terms of peace while nearly the whole of Belgium and one-fifth of France are under the heel of Prussian Junkerdom, it is well to recognize that even this terrific struggle cannot permanently arrest the development of brotherhood among mankind. It may be that England and France will use their financial and political influence to impel even the Czar and his Councillors to carry out those promises of autonomy and amelioration which at present appear illusory enough.

“Mais surtout Messieurs n'anticipez pas les évènements,” said Prince Bismarck to a deputation from one of the Balkan Principalities.

Whatever you do, don't make twelve o'clock at eleven. Never was this advice more sound than in regard to any endeavour to bring about fraternal relations among peoples in organized form until conditions are ripe for the new development. While the mass of the people of all the great European States are engaged in slaughtering one another, with the most improved scientific machines for promoting sudden death or permanent mutilation, it is an insult to the troops engaged in this terrible warfare to talk of the eternal brotherhood of man and the necessity for immediate peace before a decision is arrived at. In this way Socialists, democrats, and pacifists who are so eager to "anticipate events" simply call down ridicule from without and stir up dire conflict within. It is natural for Socialists, whose hopes have been frustrated and ideals dragged in dust and blood, to desire to hasten on the meeting of an International Socialist Congress. The day will surely come. But not yet. Perhaps not, as we could wish it, for some years. Nations and races have to be emancipated before they can take any effective part in the great international movement.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND PEACE

WHEN I debated with Charles Bradlaugh in the old St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, just thirty-one years ago, on "Will Socialism benefit the English people?" he stipulated beforehand that I should give a definition of Socialism. Bradlaugh himself was great at definitions, and I considered this demand quite reasonable. I therefore did my best to satisfy him, and stated that "Socialism is a conscious endeavour to substitute for the anarchical competition of to-day the organized co-operation of to-morrow." I do not claim that this covers the whole of the ground by any means; but, if all that is expressed, in this connection, by the word "conscious" is fully understood, the sentence quoted comes as near to satisfying the request for a brief and clear statement of the aims and objects of Social-Democracy as any I could formulate at the present time. Simple as it appears to be, the conceptions

underlying the definition involve for their complete realization by far the greatest social transformation and revolution the world has ever seen.

At all periods of human history the great majority of people have believed that the social forms under which they lived were, in the main, permanent; even when, as we can now see, changes of the most important character were going on around them. The ablest brains of antiquity could not conceive of a stable society in which chattel slavery would be unknown. Yet this great institution finally disappeared. Its downfall was due, in the Roman Empire, to economic causes which brought about the emancipation of the slaves that all the servile wars had been wholly unable to accomplish. The price of slaves rose as further Roman conquests were rendered impossible; the cost of their keep increased owing to inferior cultivation; manumission became common because, except for the very rich, it was practically unavoidable. Thereupon, it was discovered that slavery was on the whole immoral, and the Church hurried to give its religious encouragement and sanction to what economics had decreed and ethics had accepted. But neither slaveholder, moralist, nor ecclesiastic had the remotest idea what would

constitute the succeeding stages of human development after the downfall of that system of chattel slavery upon which the superstructure of their society was mainly built. They could never have imagined that, hundreds of years later, wagedom, which is little better than chattel slavery in disguise, would carry on the traditions of class supremacy.

Yet that is the position of the most highly civilized countries to-day. The overwhelming majority of the population in Great Britain, for example, consists of wage-earners. That is to say, they are men and women who have no means of earning a livelihood save by the sale of the labour-power in their own bodies to those who possess or control the means of making wealth. A slave, says Cobbett, is a man who possesses no property. The ordinary workers of our day possess no property, and, in the case of factory and even agricultural toilers, do not own or control their own tools. On the contrary, their tools, in the shape of machinery, in one form or another, virtually own and control them, dictating the speed at which they shall work and the amount they shall produce, while the product itself passes clean out of their hands.

True, the modern wage-slave is nominally free and possesses certain illusory political

rights which his ancestor the chattel slave did not enjoy. But this freedom and these rights have not yet sufficed to emancipate the wage-slave class from economic servitude to the class which has succeeded the old land and slave holders in control over the great means and instruments for the creation of wealth. The individual wage-earner is no longer at the command of a single master ; but during the whole of his working time he is completely dominated by the employing class, or by the companies which have been created by that class. Whereas, also, the old chattel slave, with all his disadvantages, had certain recognized claims upon his owner, the wage-slave has no claims whatever upon his master or the manager. If times are bad and there is no profit to be made by paying him wages for the use of his labour-power, out he goes upon the street, and the employer either runs his plant on short time or shuts it down altogether.

The fact that a certain proportion of the workers receive good wages, in comparison with others who are paid on a lower level of subsistence, makes no difference to the system. Some highly educated slaves received considerable remuneration from their owners, and even became rich men, but this did not affect the lot of the mass of overworked and ill-fed

slaves of the same owners toiling in their mines or on their fields under a villicus. (This latter "organizer of labour," by the way, received a smaller ration than the slaves themselves, on the express ground that his duty was less exhausting than theirs.) What prevents the present wage-slaves of all grades from understanding how little freedom they really possess is the payment of wages in cash. This wholly pecuniary bond blinds them to the fact that they receive on the average but a fraction of the value of the wealth they produce in return for the use of their capacity to labour; just as their power to change from one employer to another obscures the other truth that they are always, in reality, under duress to the capitalist class as a whole.

All this was clearly and vigorously pointed out to the working class of Great Britain by the more advanced of the Chartists in the first half of the nineteenth century. The term "Social-Democrat," also, which is supposed to come from Germany, was first employed by one of the leaders of that great but unsuccessful movement of 1839. It meant a Socialist who was at the same time a Democrat, as opposed to the State or Bureaucratic Socialists who, even thus early, made their appearance in the field. The Chartists

taught that so long as the payment of wages by one class to another class continued, and production for profit under a competitive system consequently remained the dominant form of employment, it was quite impossible for the propertyless majority to emancipate themselves from the control of the rich. The upper grades of wage-earners in the various trades might, as their trade unions gained strength, obtain certain advantages by agreements with the capitalists. But they could only do so through recognizing the validity of the system itself, while the lower descriptions of labourers were in no case able to make even this little way against the economic forces above them.

The only possible remedy for this state of things, in which the very progress of society tended to put more and more power at the disposal of the *bourgeoisie*,¹ was, according to

¹ The term *bourgeoisie* has no equivalent in English, and ought now to be incorporated into our language. *Bourgeoisie* connotes the whole of the social strata and classes, in every country which has reached the capitalist stage of development, that do not belong to the workers or wage-earners. Thus the word includes the land-owning class, which nowadays constitutes itself a sleeping partner with the capitalist class in the division of the surplus value created by the working class. Bourgeois ideas, bourgeois ethics, and bourgeois laws dominate our existing society, and are being very slowly modified by the views of the disinherited class who will carry out the social revolution.

these champions of the proletariat, the victory of the workers, who would then cease to be wage-earners and would constitute the entire community. This would gain for the whole people organized Social-Democracy, owning and controlling all the great means of making and distributing wealth, and would thus establish the Co-operative Commonwealth. Two full generations have elapsed since the break-up of the Chartist movement. Several of the minor political proposals of their leaders have been adopted. But as we look round at the present moment we must admit that, regarded from their point of view, economic and social progress, in the interest of the whole people, has been so deplorably slow as to be scarcely observable.

The merit of Marx was that, thrusting aside almost brutally the methods of what has been called Utopian Socialism—much as he admired the personal work of St. Simon, Fourier, Owen, and others—he devoted his life to providing a thorough historic and scientific basis for the revolutionary doctrines of his immediate precursors in Great Britain and elsewhere. How great was the service he thus rendered to humanity will, I predict, be far better appreciated in the future even than it is now. Temporary success is no conclusive proof of

the soundness of any theory or movement. But when we see, a full generation after Marx's death, that those who accept in the main his economic and sociologic analysis, and are guided by the broad lines of his material synthesis, muster in millions to-day as against a few hundred thousands in 1882; when we observe also that their numbers grow rapidly year after year, in the face of most bitter opposition and furious criticism, it is certain that we have here something which the educated and dominant class of all countries would do well to study carefully. Superficial criticism is futile; conspiracy of silence has no effect. The growth of the International Socialist Party in every civilized country, founded on this scientific Socialism, is the more remarkable since Marx's writings are not couched in a very readable style, and his views themselves are not easy to grasp and apply even when expounded in popular shape. More remarkable still, they engender an almost theological enthusiasm and rancour in the minds of many who had previously been indifferent to the welfare of others and apathetic as to their own.

Never before, I think, has a system of political economy and sociologic and historic investigation, relying wholly upon reasoning and

argument, and dealing exclusively with material causes and effects, engendered such fanaticism, combined with such unwearying determination. Yet the theories themselves, derived from concrete illustrations drawn from the social conditions of to-day, read cold and philosophic enough. In this country, indeed, where Marx's views are not contemned as mischievous and incorrect, they are still regarded as little more than abstractions. But it is quite different elsewhere. The great majority of delegates at International Congresses are invariably Socialists of the Marxist school. The danger in this direction is that the adherents of these opinions may degenerate into a sect, whose *doctrinaire* tenets will put them out of touch with the mass of the people. Signs of this unfortunate tendency are already not lacking, and the less advanced the stage of popular education in any given nation the more probable is it that the party there should take this turn.

But what are the contentions of Social-Democrats at the present moment, and what are the steps which they propose to take when international relations between the workers are resumed after the war?

There are certain points on which all Socialists are agreed, from whatever standpoint they regard the problems of future development.

These are, that the community should own and control all the means and instruments of creating wealth, to be used in the interests of the whole people, and that, so far as possible, this end should be striven for by peaceful methods in order to minimize the chances of reaction. The sentimental Socialists, the Ethical Socialists, the Church Socialists are all at one upon this. Collectivism in place of individualism, co-operation instead of competition, production for use instead of production for profit. These are the ideals to be kept steadily before us. Even men and women who do not admit the truth of the materialist conception of history, who do not recognize class antagonism and class war as being inevitable under existing social conditions, and who refuse to understand that progress can never be secured by the mass of humanity until the wage-system has been abolished and the money fetish has been swept away, will admit and accept these views.

Unfortunately, experience has shown that such well-meaning people, while avoiding the Scylla of narrow doctrinairism, fall into the Charybdis of economic compromise and are gradually absorbed into some political faction controlled by the capitalist class. The Marxists, at any rate, much as all must lament the weakness

and cowardice of their leaders in Germany on the burning question of this war of aggression, know precisely what they want and why and how they mean to get it. They have no illusions as to the moralization, or Christianization, or general sentimentalization of the capitalist or of the capitalist class. The capitalist is what he is and capitalists are what they are because, so long as their business is to make profits, they cannot avoid doing what they do.

Whether they like it or not, the workers represent to the employers in their own affairs simply a set of people who offer for sale a very remarkable commodity — the power to labour, to wit. The workers must sell it at the wages of the day, governed on the average by the cost of subsistence, or else they must starve, or go into the workhouse. The capitalists must buy the workers' sole commodity, or retire from business, or go into bankruptcy. Out of the labour embodied by the wage-earners in commodities the capitalists make their profit, because the wages paid are of much less value than the total value of the product. To this product in the shape of exchangeable commodities the machinery used adds no value except the cost of the wear and tear and the incidentals used in the process ;

nor, of course, does the new material, which merely reappears in a new shape.

Here, say Social-Democrats, is a never-ending class war : the war, namely, between the owners of the powers to produce wealth, including the land, on the one side, and the owners of the labour-power, who can only earn wages by enabling these owners to produce at a profit, on the other. Evidently, if all were combined to create wealth for general use there would be no profit and the antagonism would be at once solved.

Now, Social-Democrats hold that the entire history of the human race since the break-up of primitive communism has been the record of such class-antagonisms formerly much more numerous and in a sense more complicated than they are to-day. We have arrived at the last class-antagonism, which is, speaking broadly, the antagonism between the property-less wage-earners and the *bourgeoisie*. Sometimes this exhibits itself bitterly in the shape of strikes, which are rarely very successful, sometimes in the form of demands upon the State to restrain one or other of the conflicting interests, sometimes in the attack of the employers upon the workers as expressed in a lock-out of the wage-earners from their employment. But the struggle is always going on.

Even when capital and labour are supposed to be working in harmony there is invariably a fringe of workers, ready to work, but unemployed, who hang upon the labour market, and, by their competition, keep down the rate of wages. This, say the shrewder capitalists (and Socialists fully agree with them) is a necessity for the proper working of the whole capitalist system. Remove the unemployed permanently from the labour market and the wage-earners would gradually become possessors of the means of producing and distributing the wealth which they themselves create. This is why the Social-Democratic proposals for the co-operative employment of all toilers who may be out of work by the State itself, at a high standard of life, is always so vehemently opposed by the entire *bourgeoisie*. They know that the death-knell of the profit-making system would then speedily strike.

But we are under no delusions as to the possibility of suddenly achieving the desired transformation from Capitalism to Socialism, either peacefully or forcibly. There is no short cut to the Social Revolution. The revolts of impatience and insufficient organization only play into the hands of the dominant class, as all experience has shown. Thorough education and comprehension among the people,

combined with the general social advance to the stage of economic development which renders Socialism practically attainable, are indispensable conditions for success. A highly educated population of peasant proprietors cannot proceed to a complete Socialist system: an uneducated nation of wage-earners cannot organize a Co-operative Commonwealth, however far advanced its great factory industry may be. Even State-ownership and control, the wages system being maintained, will not be Socialized until the wage-earners themselves are prepared to undertake administration and distribution, on communal lines, for the benefit of the entire population.

Meanwhile, however, events are moving in our direction even more rapidly than Social-Democrats themselves anticipated. The expansion of the limited company, or anonymous society, as the French call it, has finally destroyed the idea that there is any personal relation in production for pecuniary profit. Those who buy shares in industrial or railway or shipping ventures, or banks, etc., have, in the majority of cases, never seen their own properties, and have not the remotest notion as to how their workers are employed, or what rates of wages they are paid. The board of directors, or more probably the managing

director, or manager, sees to all that, and in successful concerns he is assuredly not the person who absorbs the bulk of the profits. Remove the shareholders, as mere anonymous encumbrancers, and the workers could easily pay the managers their salaries, if necessary, and carry on the business equally well, even if competition were not immediately abolished.

In Great Britain, the State, even in ordinary times, is by far the greatest employer of labour, and carries on huge departments alike of distribution and production. Yet, though the State workers as a rule are very badly paid, and the remuneration of the heads of departments is by no means excessive, the work as a whole is well done. As I write the great working-class organizations are clamouring for the extension of State-ownership and control in many departments, notably in the direction of the transfer of all armament construction and maintenance to national foundries and shipyards ; while it would not take much more friction between the pitmen and the coal-owners to start a demand for the acquisition of collieries by the nation. How long will it be, as these functions of the State extend, before the workers demand that their remuneration shall be regulated, not by the lowest standard of subsistence for which they are

forced to toil, paid in wages, but by the highest standard of physical and mental enjoyment, provided in goods, out of the total wealth which can be created by the services of the whole community? And how far shall we then be from Socialism?

Abstract considerations as to the Few and the Many are of little or no importance in relation to social changes of this kind. It is not the deserving few—the inventors, discoverers, adapters, organizers—who take to themselves the bulk of the social wealth created by the toilers.

Even if this were so, and I were thus drawn into a discussion on the ethics of individual appropriation, it has long ago been observed that the very highest efforts of the human intelligence are in the main social, and due to the unceasing progress of the race, from prehistoric times up to our own day. Nobody now disputes that all the bed-rock inventions and discoveries of mankind were made under the old primitive communism. It is equally certain that in this primitive communism, remains of which are found among so-called savage tribes in all parts of the world, no individual of the tribe would possess any personal rights over his invention or discovery. We of the twentieth century inherit these social

gains which increased the collective powers of man over nature, on the small scale then possible, and are under endless obligations to these unknown Archimedes and Leonardos of the past.

The same is true of similar progress made at a far later date. It is beyond dispute, therefore, that the ablest men of science and the most brilliant inventors and practical adapters do but carry a few steps farther the accumulated knowledge of centuries. They cannot, by any possibility, relieve themselves of their long chain of obligation, even if they wished to do so. More than this, if a genius, moving ahead of his time, discovers some great physical truth or invents a new machine, it remains useless for all practical purposes until the social surroundings become suitable for its application ; and of this there have been numerous instances. Thus, the great men of past ages, whom we esteem and admire for their individual work and social services, are all indebted in turn to the unseen and unrecorded work of their predecessors of long ago.

The man of genius is not highly paid in our modern society, nor does he wish to be ; it is the keen, cunning appropriator and trustifier, never having invented anything or benefited anybody, who, under our legal enactments and private property institutions, receives the

greatest share of surplus value—as a reward for what? For having done us the honour to be born in possession of his anti-social qualities. But, in reality, it makes no difference to the workers, as a class, what the character, condition, or claims may be of those who divide up among themselves the surplus value created by the workers' labour after they have received their wages—out of which, be it remarked in passing, they have to pay back rent to the dominant class. Neither is it of the slightest importance to them whether the participators be few or many, good men or bad. All they know—those of them who study the problem of their own economic subjection—is that no matter how clever a wage-earner may be, the odds are more than a thousand to one he will toil all his life for the benefit of others, and die as poor as he has lived.

Meanwhile, however, the permanent underlying laws of this anarchic society, where social ends can only be attained by antagonistic means, are making themselves felt through the industrial chaos which they will eventually harmonize and co-ordinate, so soon as mankind appreciates the course and the tendency of their development.

Fourier first pointed out in 1825 that competition must find its logical term in monopoly.

It has taken eighty years of continuous progress to verify the truth of this forecast. Now all can see that this gradual concentration of capital, whether under nominal Free Trade or actual Protection, was inevitable. The one object of every individual capitalist is to make larger profits and to extend the scope of his business, if need be at the expense of his competitors. The rule of such a struggle is, "Get bigger or burst." When the smaller man bursts the bigger organizer of labour "acquires his assets" and "extends the operations" of his firm. Soon this is too heavy a job for the individual capitalist. Then the company form of capitalist control comes in, and shareholders replace individual owners. As time goes on these separate companies, fighting one another at reduced prices in the same trade, find that they could do their work much more economically and dispense with a large portion of their *faux frais*—commercial travellers, advertisements, costs of distribution, and the like—if they would only co-operate with, instead of competing against one another. Straightway they drop their daggers of mutual economic conflict and combine for their common advantage, making thereby greater profits for the fraternal shareholders in the erstwhile rival concerns. From this to monopoly, in

certain branches of production and trade, is no long step. Unconsciously the capitalists, by this far-sighted repudiation of free competition, have rendered socialization in each separate department much easier than it would have been if their own interests had not marshalled them the way that we are going.

What I have written so far can scarcely be regarded as vehement or inflammatory. On the contrary, it is, I think, a plain and rather dull statement of economic facts, looked at from the standpoint of an educated Socialist. In the United States, where Trusts, Combines, and general agreements not to compete are more powerful, or perhaps I should say more in evidence, than they are here, the Federal Government has been endeavouring to check or even to break up these vast concentrations of capital, in the supposed interest of the nation at large. Strong personal feeling is introduced, and the great American billionaires—the richest men the world has ever seen—are denounced as enemies of the Republic. But such reactionary attempts and rhetorical objurgation are futile. However wrong, or temporarily objectionable, the actions of these folk may be, it is quite impossible to prevent the development of economic forces by legal enactments, or to restrain them permanently

by the judgments of the Courts. Properly considered, the gigantic Trusts are carefully preparing in every department for the establishment of Socialism. Some of their principal men are beginning to recognize whither events are tending, and one of the ablest of them stated not long ago that such a vast enterprise as the Steel Trust could not be allowed much longer to carry on its business outside the control of the community.

And that is the plain truth. Unfortunately, we in Great Britain are, as usual, muddling along, without any intelligent guidance from above or any clear-cut demands from below. Foreigners tell us that there is more floating Socialism in the United Kingdom than anywhere else in the world. But this is precisely the difficulty. Floating Socialism in society, like "float gold" in the mines, is uncommonly hard to catch and utilize.

Many, many years ago I predicted that, our education as a people being so desperately bad as it is, we should never come near to Socialism, or recognize that, co-operatively produced, wealth to-day could be as plentiful as water, until we had, as a nation, received a great shock from without. Then only would our people begin to comprehend what was going on around them. Thirty-five years of

continuous teaching and agitation have further convinced me of the soundness of this forecast. Not even the continuous rise of the prices of the necessities of life (owing chiefly to the cheapening of the cost of production of gold, which is the universal measure of value) could wake our people up till August last year. Though wages had fallen in purchasing power to such an extent that a pound sterling valued on the level of twenty shillings in 1901 could procure necessities only to the value of 16s. 6d., or at the outside 17s., in August 1914, it was useless to point this out to the workers as a reason for vigorous, combined action. The utmost they would do was to strike for a moderate rise of wages, which, if obtained, was insufficient to make up for the rise in price. In other directions they showed similar apathy and indifference.

But no sooner had we drifted into this tremendous war than a very different spirit appeared. It became at once manifest that the whole capitalist system, unless bolstered up by the national credit, would go bankrupt. The Government rushed to the aid of bankers, bill-brokers, stock exchange magnates, great ship-owners and mercantile houses; took over the railways, commandeered 1,500 ships, guaranteed marine assurance, and generally used the whole

financial power of the nation, not only to make good the short-sighted policy which landed us unprepared in the greatest war of all time, but to save the wealthy classes from ruin.

Shareholders, for instance, in the huge banking monopoly were not even required to pay up the balance of the calls upon their shares, but were allowed to refuse to repay to their clients deposits in cash actually entrusted in all good faith to them for safe custody. It was of crucial importance that their dividends should not be cut down! Naturally, the wage-earning class began to understand what all this meant. The national credit is *their* credit, just as the national Army is overwhelmingly *their* army. The Army could not fight effectively without officers. But where would the officers be without the rank and file? Just so in industry and transport. The workers might not be able to do without the capitalists under existing legal conditions. But where would the capitalists be without the workers? Where indeed? Their mines, their factories, their shops, their railways, their lands could be handled advantageously by the community even if all employers and shareholders left the country in disgust. This, it is true, is not quite how the mass of the wage-earners reason as yet. But it very soon may be.

People have already begun to demand that the Government, which has drifted the nation into war without preparation, should forthwith turn the same powers which they have lavishly used for the benefit of the wealthy to the service of the poor. A far-reaching change of opinion has commenced. What the workers might once have been grateful for as bountiful charity they now claim, on a much larger scale, as a right. The raising of huge loans, too, almost as a matter of course, for war is teaching the masses what might with equal ease be obtained for their own purposes in peace. Palliatives of poverty which we Social-Democrats had advocated in vain for years, which had indeed been opposed by the most trusted representatives of the trade unions themselves, are now accepted and pushed forward almost without discussion. A programme, Socialist in all but name, was issued by the National Workers' (War Emergency) Committee, and that committee represents no fewer than 4,500,000 persons—trade unionists, co-operators, Socialists, most of them heads of families, or some 17,000,000 people in all.¹

¹ The following extracts from this programme, which is being steadily advocated throughout the country, proves that the above statement is no exaggeration :—

"We call upon the entire Labour and Socialist Movement,

The heavy rise of prices, over and above those already referred to, has in the past six months reduced the purchasing value of a pound a week to less than 14s. as compared with what the same coin would have bought in 1901. The last turn of the screw in this crushing economic impost has been pressed down upon the people quite suddenly. They therefore feel it far more than they otherwise would. They know that there is no shortage of wheat on the markets of the world which at all warrants the rise of bread from 5d. to 8d. for the quartern loaf. Yet they have to pay. At once there is a loud and de-

through all its national and local organizations, to force these demands upon the Government by an immediate national campaign, expressing itself in public meetings, the distribution of literature, the passing of resolutions by affiliated branches of Labour and Socialist bodies, and in such other ways as may be deemed effective.

"7. (a) Provision of productive work, at standard rates of wages, for the unemployed.

"(b) Where the provision of work is impracticable, maintenance to be granted on a standard sufficiently high to ensure the preservation of the home and the supply of what is necessary for a healthy life, and the immediate abandonment of all the inquisitorial methods now too often used in order to restrict the amount of relief.

"(c) Trade Unions to be subsidized out of national funds to such an extent as will permit them (where provision of work is impossible) to pay members unemployed benefit without bankrupting their resources.

"8. The encouragement and development of home-grown

terminated cry for Government intervention, and "profiteers" are denounced in unmeasured language, even by those who are not suffering most seriously. Men and women who but yesterday spoke to me as if Socialism were a mere chimera, and I myself were an infatuated visionary, now admit privately that, if things go on as they are going, there is no remedy for the existing state of things but organized co-operation supported by the national resources. Whether Social-Democrats are right in their theories and sound in their practical proposals or not, it is certain that never in my long life have they been listened to and

food supplies by the national organization of agriculture, accompanied by drastic reductions of freight charges for all produce, in the interests of the whole people.

"9. Protection of the people against exorbitant prices, especially in regard to food, by the enactment of maxima and the commandeering of supplies by the nation wherever advisable.

"10. The inauguration of a comprehensive policy of municipal housing.

"11. National care of motherhood, by the establishment of maternity and infant centres; the provision of nourishment for expectant and nursing mothers, of doctor or midwife at confinement, and of helps in the house while the mother is laid aside.

"12. The compulsory provision of meals and clothing for school children, three meals a day, seven days a week.

"13. The continuance of national control over railways, docks, and similar enterprises at the close of the war, with a view to the better organization of production and distribution."

applauded with the sober vigour they are to-day. The fact that the present administration has carried out all its pro-capitalist measures regardless of the House of Commons, and has played fast and loose with our ancestral liberties, without any reference to the people, is also slowly, but none the less surely, rousing a feeling which may easily produce important results in our favour.

At the same time, the reduction in the amount of food available per household, while rents remain as high as ever; the pressure on the children, who are suffering terribly; the short supply of coal, which tells heavily upon health when food is short—all these things, superadded to the poverty already existing, not only stir up discontent with the conditions of to-day, but are leading the workers to demand a far better state of things to-morrow. It is useless for our rulers to rejoice at the continuance of good employment. Where the hugest profits are being made, cash wages for equal work remain stationary: in several coal districts they have been actually reduced since the war, and this at a moment when his wages represent less subsistence for the worker than they have ever done in our period.

Is it to be wondered at that, in such con-

ditions, the cry for an organized collectivism should be growing louder and louder every day? Especially is this not surprising when, during the whole of this period of devastating poverty, the Insurance Poll Tax is being relentlessly exacted, though its advantage to the poorest of the poor, who are paying the tax directly out of their stomachs, is becoming more problematical every day. State Socialism, with its persistent jobbery and overpaid bureaucracy, is a considerable distance from Social-Democracy, where the whole people control the creation and distribution of their own wealth to their common good. But it obviously gives the mass of the workers, with whom the lower grades of the educated classes are more and more associating themselves, much better opportunities for taking the next and decisive step of abolishing wagedom altogether, than any relations which they could establish with employers as a class. The latter, as already said, are learning that wide combinations are far more profitable to them than the continuance of internecine competition. The wage-earners are being taught the same lesson of close combination to fight for a common cause.

Their solidarity as a class is constantly growing. Since the present Government mobilized half the national army against the strikers

in 1911, enormous progress has been made in this direction, and, unfavourable as has been the experience of strikes, the possibility of a really effective general strike against the whole employing class is being discussed in a more serious spirit than ever before. I have no belief myself in this policy, nor do I think it will be carried out in support of any demand, however justifiable it may be. But the steady consolidation of the forces of labour renders an attempt in this direction by no means so improbable as it was not long ago.

The really critical times in these islands will come after the declaration of peace. The workers have borne more than their fair share of the fighting: the proportion of wage-earners to well-to-do men at the front being at least twenty-four to one. When these soldiers return they will be very different men from what they were when they left. They will know that they have been the means of helping to avert, by their coolness and discipline and heroism, the disaster to Western civilization which the victory of Germany would have occasioned. But as they survey the condition of their class, which large numbers of them will do from the ranks of the unemployed, it is at least probable they will ask themselves: "Was it

worth while?" Social-Democracy may well appeal to these trained soldiers, when they look again upon the squalid conditions in which millions of their fellow-men and women exist, and reflect how the glories of war have only brought them back to the horrors of peace. The policy of "the survival of the fittest" and the morality of individual greed (mollified by individual charity) have utterly failed to preserve our society from the hideous squalor of our slums, the physical deterioration of our factory folk, the desperate ugliness of our industrial centres, and the inferior instruction which is thought good enough for the poor. But it is not from the poorest and most miserable that the great awakening will come. Only the vigorous, the trained, the disciplined, the organized, the educated can be trusted to use changed political forms, or democratic military force, to help forward the social emancipation.

Social - Democracy will, as I believe, rise stronger than ever before in every country from this frightful war. The longer the war lasts the more exhausted will be the combatants and the more discontented the workers, who are the chief sufferers in all the belligerent countries. Socialists are not merely in favour of peace; they are the only people

who, while not denouncing the principle of nationality, openly proclaim that there is and can be no reasonable cause for strife between the masses of the population on either side of any arbitrary boundary. They alone declare, in season and out of season, that as in each nation the real enemy of the population is the class which keeps the overwhelming majority in the position of wage-earners, so in all nations these same wage-earners should have as their closest friends and allies the workers of every nationality, who are suffering under the same economic and social disabilities as themselves. Even during this war the spirit of proletarian solidarity is slowly making itself felt, in spite of the furious campaign of hatred preached in the country mainly responsible for hostilities.

When peace is proclaimed it will be impossible for the rulers of any of the European nations to neglect the rising forces of democracy, and these democracies will be more and more inspired by Socialist ideals and impelled towards the enactment of Socialist measures. As the great factory industry and capitalism on a large scale were first developed in this island, Great Britain is more ready, economically, than any other nation for the commencement of the active period of

transformation which has in truth already unconsciously begun. Unfortunately, our political forms, which should give a peaceful outlet to the necessary social changes are several generations behind our economic development. They do but afford political expression to the plutocratic and bureaucratic dominations, which in turn are the outcome of the obstructive and reactionary stage of production for profit ; while the education of the people as a whole does little more than inculcate error with the object of maintaining the present outworn system. Let us hope that we may yet be able to overcome these terrible drawbacks, and, as champions of the coming democracy of social equality, aspire to give a beneficent and unenvied lead to the peoples of the world. Certain it is that the nation which first rises to the height of this glorious endeavour will render an unforgettable service to mankind.

CHAPTER IV

CLASS-STATE BUREAUCRACY¹

A CLEVER lady whom I knew well in Melbourne some five and forty years ago once wrote me a charming letter, here at home, the closing words of which were: "And pray, my dear Mr. Hyndman, do not be so dreadfully Republican. If one King is so bad, what must a Committee of them be?"

The idea of a Committee of Kings struck me at the time as grotesque, not to say humorous. Little, however, did I imagine that I should live to see my friend's conception realized in this island. Nevertheless, it is. The Monarchy here is virtually in Commission, the House of Commons is reduced to the level of a "Bed of Justice," kept up to register Cabinet decrees, and the people are deprived of all control over their own affairs. Thus, the United Kingdom, with India and the Crown Colonies, is at the mercy of a self-chosen Board of Autocrats, no two of

¹ Published in May 1915.

whom are in full agreement on any subject. Our subservience to the Trade Union of Lawyers is becoming so complete that we scarce have pluck enough left to chalk up on the walls, after the manner of the French, "A bas les avocats !" and then run away. In the course of a few months we have surrendered, with a light heart, the democratic work of seven centuries to a group of politicians who in July last had certainly lost the confidence of the nation—politicians who landed us in this terrific war (which they now admit they knew to be coming) without anything like adequate preparation. A Committee of Kings, indeed !

The situation would be ludicrous if it were not so dangerous. Yet at present nobody cares. Public interest is so concentrated on the events of the war that proceedings which, at any other time, would arouse a fury of popular indignation, are almost disregarded. We grumble a little at this or that high-handed action, tampering with our hard-won freedoms ; but the country as a whole is so apathetic, and has become so careless in matters of crucial import, that we are drifting into irresponsible tyranny at home, as we drifted into the greatest war of all time abroad, without any security either for upholding demo-

crazy, or for obtaining efficiency. Nothing quite like it has been seen in our history. Even the Lord Protector himself could not reduce the House of Commons, so long as it remained in being, to the depth of servility to which it has descended at the beginning of the twentieth century. When, in spite of his threats, that ancient Assembly persisted in claiming the right of criticism, and the privilege of interference, he at least had the decency to avoid, for once, even the appearance of hypocrisy; he turned the whole of its members out by force of arms and locked up their own House against them. If Mr. Asquith would imitate old Oliver, and openly, instead of secretly, appoint a group of Major-Generals to run his lawyer-made rule, we should at least know where we really are.

People at large have no idea how far we are going, or are being driven, since public discussion in Parliament has been in abeyance and both the capitalist factions are at one. Nobody can tell us precisely what the law is, at the present time, in regard to personal and private liberties, which we have all of us believed from our childhood to be absolutely indefeasible. The Defence of the Realm Act, the Amendment to the Defence of the Realm Act, Orders in Council, Local Orders by mili-

tary authorities, suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, interference with trial by jury, and so on, make such chaos of the Statute Book that even capable lawyers are at a loss to know where we stand.

One of the most important measures of those submitted to the House of Commons for approval was not even distributed to members, and narrowly escaped being carried on the strength of what was contained in a single uncertified copy in manuscript. This recalls Lord Randolph Churchill's remark, when a similar trick was tried many years ago. In that instance, an amendment was copied in pencil on a sheet of paper by one of the leaders on his own side, and handed down to him, as valuable information, while he was speaking. Lord Randolph continued his speech and, glancing at the communication, said: "Things have come to a pretty pass in this House, when important amendments have to be discussed on dirty little bits of paper." Then, screwing up the note into a ball, he flipped it at the mover, and so disposed of the matter. Official personages have been pretty much the same in all periods; but nowadays they make the war an excuse for bureaucratic domination on a scale which is not even justified by a "dirty little bit of paper."

Since England entered upon war without due preparation, our rulers were bound to take some exceptional action if the nation was to defend itself adequately against an unscrupulous and treacherous attack, and to bear its share in the common policy forced upon the Allied Powers. Great Britain was of one mind on this point. No one complained when the Government, acting, as it averred, in the national interest, took control of the whole of our railway system. On the contrary, people felt that this extension of official authority was unavoidable, when troops and supplies and munitions had to be rapidly rushed to the Front. All criticism was suspended and the Government had a free hand. Its arrangement to protect the interests of the shareholders by guaranteeing them their dividends passed quite unchallenged, even by the workers on the railways, who themselves had no such assurance of good treatment.

Unfortunately, this assumption of the national administration of railways was not accompanied by a wide conception of the real problems of land transport. The railways are now nationalized, or rather bureaucratized, under most expensive and antiquated methods ; and when the war ends all this will be used as an argument against the useful

and beneficial reorganization of the entire system of national transport.

Our already vast irresponsible bureaucracy was, in fact, still further extended, without any possibility of instituting adequate public control, or of introducing really modern plans of conveyance. Unless great care is taken, so soon as the war is over, we shall again have all the drawbacks of monopoly wedded to all the disadvantages of competition in our national transport, and this at a moment when the pressure of German goods upon our own and the world market will call for the complete transformation of our industrial and distributive methods to meet it effectively. We are, as usual, attempting to muddle through with a haphazard Committee of Kings in regard to one of the most important portions of our national economy.

It is much the same with shipping. Obviously, the nation required that a large number of vessels should be at its disposal to convey troops to the Continent, to bring them from our Colonies and from India to the seat of war and Egypt, to keep up a constant stream of supplies for the Army, and so on. Equally clear was it that the Government could only obtain these ships by commandeering as many as were needed. We start with the nationali-

zation of railways, we proceed to the nationalization of shipping. No fewer than 1,500 steamers were thus commandeered. Excellent. Nobody again raised a word of objection. We all assumed that when exercising its authority the Government would take steps to avoid any abnormal rise of sea-borne freights against the nation, by national action on behalf of the people. Not a bit of it. What was the result? We were elated, and justly elated, at the complete success of our Navy (which, by the way, the Independent Labour Party, many Radicals, and even the Labour Party did their best to reduce to danger-point before the war) in bottling up the German North Sea Fleet, in destroying German commerce destroyers, and in securing for ourselves and our Allies the entire command of the sea. But, the more successful we were in sweeping enemy vessels from the ocean, the more successful were we also in sweeping food out of the stomachs of the British poor. The irony of unconscious ineptitude was surely never better displayed.

Freights mounted up by leaps and bounds. Coal which had been carried from Newcastle to London by sea for 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. a ton before the war, now costs for similar service, from 10s. 6d. to 13s. 6d. a ton.

From Argentina, similarly, rates of freight for wheat ran up from 12s. 6d. to 60s. or more a ton. Yet, when the Premier and other members of the Committee of Kings were challenged on this matter, and were requested to use their autocratic power to reduce the stupendous profits of the shipowners, by further national action on behalf of the people at large, the old doctrine of "supply and demand," which had been thrown overboard with glee by the Government in the matters of sugar, of indigo, of wheat (in India), etc., was quoted against us with chop-licking relish. What is more, so powerful is the Shipping Ring, and so skilfully are its funds applied in subscribing to the needs of both the great political factions, that there is very little chance of any attempt being made to deal adequately with this vast Trust, organized as it is against the interest of the entire community. The people may work hard and fight hard and the poor may starve hard, but our Government giveth to its chosen shipowners the increase. Nay, the national credit is used to lessen the amount paid for insurance, in order that this increase may be the better insured !

The control of railways and the commandeering of shipping were long steps to take

towards the constitution of a supreme bureaucracy of Class-State-Socialism, dominated by a Government which assuredly had no popular mandate for any such action. But the next move was in the direction of a complete abandonment of that very same private enterprise, and supply-and-demand principle of economics, which the Prime Minister and his colleagues still, nominally, adhere to. In this instance, Parliament has authorized the Government to take in hand, administer and organize all the factories and workshops which may be considered necessary, with the object of hastening the manufacture and supply of essential equipment and munitions for the troops. This, to use vulgar language, is a "very large order." So large that the Government itself had not even in mind the man who should be selected, as a sort of sub-dictator-in-chief to carry out this unprecedented undertaking.

Now, I believe the people of this country are absolutely determined to fight this war to a finish. But it is just those of us who believe that the Government has leaned too much on Haldane's Germanophilism, on land and on sea, who most strongly object to the measures now being taken to ensure efficiency and victory. Yet no body of people in any

class have tried to hamper our rulers in regard to any of the industrial changes which have seemed necessary. For my part, as a Social-Democrat, I am confident that National Collectivism and National Bureaucratic Administration during the war will, sooner or later, help on the development of Co-operative Democratic Socialism when we return to peace.

Meanwhile, the establishment of some sort of order, even under the management of the Class-State, is better than the perpetuation of competitive anarchy controlled by capitalism and companies. But, at the same time, we must keep a tight hold upon those democratic principles, which, however seriously they may be misapplied or checked in action under our present queer, out-of-date constitution, unquestionably underlie our whole political system. The people as a whole, I repeat, do not yet understand what a complete revolution has been made in their political and social affairs within the past few months. It would be well that they should begin to take account of this very important transformation. We are fighting side by side with the French, at any rate, in order to uphold the rights of democracies against the last military caste left on the planet, and to secure the independence of small nationalities. If we imperil our own

freedoms while fighting for the liberties of others, the disillusion and the danger will be great indeed.

Far be it from a Social-Democrat, of necessity a philosopher, a collectivist, and a man of peace even at the price of war, to cavil at the use of the nation's resources under national management for the protection of the realm. But why should nearly all the burdens of this new bureaucracy fall on the producers, from the Dan of the Insurance Act even unto the Beersheba of compulsory abstinence? For this is only the beginning of the business, even if, for the sake of the suggestions of the name just used, I touch first upon the most recent phase of Cromwellian compulsion. Ours is a Teetotal Administration. "So they say!"—as the Mohammedan Guard at the Palace replied to the old Czar Nicholas I when, on Easter Day, the Emperor addressed his Moslem subject with the time-worn greeting "He is Risen." However that may be, it is clear that, following hard upon the example of notoriously temperate Russia, our rulers were all eager to close the poor man's public-houses by force of Parliamentary enactment, or Order in Council. The ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer was strenuously engaged in sawing off the branch on which the balance of his Budget

depended, in order to convince us of his earnestness in this matter. Nay, more, he averred, with all the solemnity of the Nonconformist conscience in high office, that the delay in the supply of the munitions of war, for which his colleague and fellow-abstainer, Lord Kitchener, so well and truly yearns, was due to the drunkenness of the munition-makers. Further, he gave the impression in his talk with the Shipbuilders' Federation that alcoholism—always among the workers, of course—is seriously on the increase.

Thereupon a sudden thought—advertized beforehand by the United Kingdom Alliance—struck him. Let the decree go forth from the Lawyer-Kings in Council, with their hereditary Monarch in the ante-chamber, that all Britain shall be sober whether Britain likes it or not. And the House of Commons with one accord shall say "Amen." But the common folk declare that this charge of universal sottishness brought against the people is the most outrageously false imputation ever made upon the working-men of this country; that no German abroad, or pro-German in England, had ever so traduced and insulted the mass of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen who make the wealth of our nation. As they further tell us, so much overtime is being

worked in the factories, in the effort to comply with the demands of the War Office, that, unless the managers take the same sort of care of the men as the Krupp directors under official supervision do, nervous breakdown will be quite common ; and, so far from drunkenness being the general cause of inefficiency, only a small minority of wage-earners now suffer from this vice ; in itself chiefly the outcome of poverty and excessive strain. All which is indisputable and capable of proof.

So, then, we have citations from Mr. George's speeches to show that he never meant what he was generally taken to mean, and that in reality he only says quite a few of the workers are given to drink. But is the whole country, then, to be knocked off alcoholic liquors because a minority of men and women are apt to take more than is good for them? Hard cases make bad law. To subject the vast majority to despotic regimentation, by reason of the shortcomings of the few, is foolish tyranny. Why, instead of attempting the impossible, at the dictation of a set of well-to-do fanatics, who never knew what starvation or physical overwork is, does not the Government see to it that sound, light beer and other drinks are supplied, that public-houses become hostelries for the public in-

stead of mere bars for the supply of alcohol, and that adulteration should be punished as a crime? That is one of those mysteries which cannot be explained.

This attempt upon the workers' liberties—upon the freedom of the class that is doing most of the fighting and all the production—though it has roused more feeling than all the rest put together, is but the most recent of a whole series of tyrannical enactments. Who would have believed a few years ago, for example, that any English Government would dare, without authority from Parliament, or any notification as to what was being done, to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act? and that, this having been decided upon, the Judges should be instructed not even "to state a case," in order that the matter might be argued publicly in Court? Yet that is precisely what occurred in the case of the unfortunate man Dove, master of a steam-trawler on the south-east coast. On returning to port he accidentally ran down one of our submarines. There was not a tittle of evidence from the first to show that this was anything but a pure accident, or that Mr. Dove was in any way to blame, even for carelessness. Yet "the authorities" took for granted that the collision was brought about on purpose, that Dove was acting in

the interest of the King's enemies, and that he had no defence of any kind. He was therefore haled into custody, bail was refused, he could get no satisfaction under writ of Habeas Corpus through his counsel, and the poor fellow might be in gaol to this hour but for the intervention of Lord Parmoor and the House of Lords. This confession is not a little humiliating to a democrat and a Socialist who has always been opposed to any non-elected Assembly. But so it is.

To that reactionary House, also, is due the revival of trial by jury, which had been suppressed for certain cases under the original Defence of the Realm Act. As showing, likewise, what monstrous injustice might be perpetrated if Habeas Corpus and Trial by Jury were both removed from the list of our legal protections against arbitrary rule, it turned out in the end that the Government had no case at all against the man Dove. Not a single charge was formulated against him when he was brought from gaol into Court, and he was, of course, discharged without, so far as is known, any compensation whatever being paid him for his illegal and wholly unjustifiable incarceration. We may all find ourselves in his case if vigilance is relaxed; for class legislation was

never so pronounced as now ; and never, for good reasons as well as bad, was the public more apathetic about its own rights. Attacks on individual freedom, which cannot be beneficial either to the individuals or to the community, are now, indeed, quite common ; but few of these are dealt with as they ought to be. Much, too, is being done and more attempted, under direct military law, of which the public hears nothing ; and it is impossible to obtain the local enactments by which such petty tyranny is fostered. When, some time before the war, Mr. Winston Churchill suggested the organization of military districts under military men of high rank, in imitation of Cromwell's instalment of Major-Generals, as the supreme authorities throughout England, people laughed. But that is the *régime* under which we are, to a large extent, actually living to-day. The military order for the regulation of women of loose life at Cardiff is only one out of many instances of high-handed action to justify which no law, nor even any Order in Council, can be cited.

Quite recently, large schools have been commandeered throughout the country for hospitals by the War Office, though there are plenty of empty private houses much better suited for the purpose which could be adapted

at a fraction of the expenditure considered necessary for the luxury of German officers at Donington Hall. So it goes.

Where military men cannot very well act, the police are called in. Thus Jim Larkin's brother gets a month's imprisonment because, being boycotted by employers, he goes to his work under another name. I have no sympathy with Larkin's anarchistic opinions, but an Act of Parliament or an Order in Council which supports this sort of injustice towards a man who is unpopular with the capitalists is tyranny. Then it is assumed that a proportion of the wives of soldiers will use their payments and allowances for strong drink. All soldiers' wives are, therefore, placed by order under police superintendence—the very worst sort of supervision possible for soldiers' wives, no matter how capable the constables may be in the performance of their ordinary duties. This rouses serious opposition. The order is, in consequence, allowed, so it is said, to lapse. But, as a matter of fact, such inquisitorial and objectionable interferences may be revived anywhere at any moment, and in some places they are still going on.

Again, if there is one point on which public opinion has advanced more than another during the past thirty years, it is upon the employ-

ment of children in industry. Even in Lancashire, a genuinely strong democratic Government would be quite safe in putting an end to the half-time system; though, to their shame be it said, most of the fathers and mothers in that county support this sweating of their offspring, because it brings them in more money, and they themselves underwent similar treatment. But now the local educational authorities in the agricultural districts are being permitted to set back the clock in this matter by allowing young children to work in the fields in place of adults at ridiculous rates of wages. So far, no adequate opposition has checked this deadly attack upon the vigour of the next generation.

It would be easy to multiply instances of the way in which our liberties are being unnecessarily infringed, not for the public benefit or to ensure public safety, or even to increase our effectiveness as a nation in the tremendous war we are waging. From the incompetent and foolish meddling of the Press Bureau to the wholesale opening and, in some cases, the using and publishing of private letters in the *cabinet noir* of the Post Office, we are at the mercy, not of one powerful and capable if obnoxious dictator, but of a series of petty despots and jacks-in-office, who take advantage

of the truce in party politics, and the general desire not to embarrass the Government to imperil and attack our ancestral liberties in every direction. We might all be ready to put up with a Cromwell for a time, if only we could make sure that he could be quietly removed when he had done his work. But to acquiesce in the present rule of a set of nominated Committees, with all sorts of unrestricted powers under the supreme Committee of a Cabinet, which was not elected for the wholly unforeseen and enormous work that it has in hand, is simply to create an inefficient and dangerous Cromwellism, minus the Cromwell, from which we shall find it no easy matter to free ourselves when the German military combination is crushed and peace is proclaimed.

I have left the above almost as I wrote it at the end of April, 1915. Events move so fast that we are apt to forget how we find ourselves in the position we occupy to-day, and we shall soon have forgotten how we stand to-day in the still more serious circumstances of to-morrow. It is, indeed, no easy matter to keep a trustworthy record of what is going on. From the haphazard jack-in-office bureaucracy, already described, we are

drifting steadily into Wage-Slavery of the State. When this was first predicted as the inevitable result of the Insurance Poll Tax, the Blackleg Labour Exchanges, etc., I could not believe that the people of this island would ever put up with such an objectionable system of jobbery and officialism, much as I objected to those measures themselves. But it is now quite clear that we have entered upon precisely that form of domination of the workers which most easily lends itself to corruption and tyranny. Our whole social as well as our entire political machinery is being transformed from bottom to top in the interest not of the producing but of the profiteering class: the latter having now the guarantee of the nation that their increased gains shall be secured to them.

I should be the last to deny the inevitable necessity of improved organization in every department in order to win the great fight of nationality and freedom against the militarist despotism of the Germanic powers. If some of us, who foresaw and predicted what was coming many years before it came, had been in power, such organization on a democratic basis would have been set on foot long ago. But now we are striving in hot haste to imitate German methods without German know-

ledge, or German efficiency. The Coalition Cabinet may be as versatile as it is variable. The Premier may be a second Chatham, but no statesman in the world's history ever undertook such a task as that which they have undertaken in setting to work to deal with the whole country as if every man and woman in it were bound to obey without question the commands of a self-nominated administration. The Munitions Act followed by the Registration Act, coming on the top of previous interferences with the liberties and rights of the wage-earners changes the whole foundations of our national life. Our people who as I have insisted time after time provide twenty-four twenty-fifths of the fighting forces of the country, and do all the production, are first denounced as drunken skulkers, then appealed to by the same Minister as self-sacrificing and loyal patriots, and afterwards regimented as mere mechanical munitioners. Granted, I repeat, that better organization and special effort are needed, this is not the way to get the best work out of independent Englishmen.

The truth is we are being rushed into a complete revolution by men who do not themselves fully understand what they are doing or what their own enactments mean. Our whole system of Government by Party has

been done away with. This may have been unavoidable ; but it reduces the House of Commons to a nonentity and gives an irresponsible Cabinet of twenty-two unelected persons absolute control over us. Such an unwieldy Council is obviously too large to be either efficient or responsible. It is doubtful even, if it will prove safe either for the people or for its own members. Yet we are all bound to back it simply because there is nothing else to back.

But in a nominally democratic country can anything be more grossly improper than that such an Administration should be imposed upon the United Kingdom and the Empire by a series of intrigues and compromises without any General Election or any Referendum to the people at large? Yet, had a general appeal been made before the Coalition Cabinet was constituted, had a clear and definite policy been put to the country by a capable and responsible War Committee of not more than five men, I believe that the response would have been practically unanimous. And if the opinion of the working class had been definitely tested in regard to what they were prepared to do in the factory as well as in the field, there would have been no need for a costly and superfluous Registration Bill.

As it is, though the spirit is there, and the determination to win is unshaken, there is plenty of repressed discontent which may easily break out into open denunciation unless great care is taken to avoid outraging popular feeling. The persistent secrecy maintained tends to provoke distrust. When the nation is losing hundreds of thousands of men, spending hundreds of millions sterling, sacrificing war vessels and merchant shipping wholesale, and is harassed along its coast and also inland by Zeppelins which come and go much as they please, it is entitled to know everything about its own affairs. But the one idea has been and is to keep us all in the dark about our own business for fear we should be scared. It is Ministers who are scared, not the people. They know the blunders they have made and the neglect and jobbery winked at. These might be forgiven if they would tell the truth about what they are doing and intend to do now; if also, instead of bullying and tyrannizing over the workers, they would take advantage of the splendid national feeling which the war has awakened not to curtail our ancient liberties, but to arouse fresh vigour by their extension in full.

CHAPTER V

THE REORGANIZATION OF BRITISH TRADE

THERE is a growing opinion among the workers of every country that the system of production for profit, and with it the payment of wages by one class to another, is opposed to the true interests of mankind and must ere long come to an end. More than this ; the steady substitution of combination, national and international, for competition among capitalists and industrial magnates of every description points to the conclusion that capitalism, in its earlier forms of bitter individual and company rivalry is at an end, and a new era has begun. National Trusts on the one side and State control and organization on the other, are, in fact, displacing and co-ordinating the competitive anarchy which formerly was universal. The theoretic prediction of eighty years ago that competition would find its logical term in monopoly is being verified

before our eyes. But while this process is going on, trade antagonism between nations in a more organized shape than hitherto has been fiercely waged for many years past. And the nation which was first to recognize this truth, and to use in an increasing degree the entire national forces in support of its industry and commerce, has amazed the world by the rapidity with which it has forged to the front in the world market within a generation. The advance of Germany during the last five-and-thirty years has been almost as remarkable as the progress of Japan.

This unprecedented war has necessarily put Socialism in the background for the time being. It will be many a long day I fear before it regains its full influence as an international power. The policy of Prussianized Germany has settled that for us, and in this policy German Social-Democrats, as pointed out elsewhere, have taken an active part.

Meanwhile it is beyond dispute that the 45,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom will undergo terrible hardships and sufferings unless they can hold their own in years to come on the markets of the world. As matters stand to-day, bitter though the class war between labourers and capitalists, employed and employers in the field of profiteering may,

be, the interest of the wage-earners, so long as the present system endures, must be to secure as large and as continuous a demand as possible for the commodities they produce. This, prior to the outbreak of war, had grown increasingly difficult against the admirably organized and state-aided antagonism of German manufacturers, German financiers, German merchants, and German shipowners. We were relatively losing ground against the ordered attack upon our industry, our finance, our commerce, and our carrying trade.

Had Germany continued this commercial campaign with no more than the same steadiness and ability for a few additional years, she would have overcome all her rivals including even the United States; unless we and America had both entirely changed our methods, and adopted German ways of dealing with the vast problems of world-wide trade. Germany was becoming more and more formidable with every year of peace. Those who imagine that this was due merely to "protection" are short-sighted, prejudiced, and foolish indeed. It mainly arose from a cultivation of efficiency, and a never-ceasing assiduity in pursuing the great end in view—German domination of the markets of the world—which were entirely unprecedented in history. Ger-

mans prepared for and carried on their competitive warfare in commerce with the same meticulous yet scientific foresight and exactitude that they have applied to their military campaign, with few, if any, of the mistakes which have marked the latter.

At the present time, owing to the mastery of the seas secured by the supremacy of our navy, German commerce has been swept away. There is much talk also of the capture of German trade now and after the war, by speakers and writers who evidently have never tried to understand why Germany achieved the success she most assuredly did attain, in spite of all the Royal adjurations of many years ago to England to "Wake up." We remained asleep, and we were content to depend on Germany for some of the most important essentials of our own industry. It is on record that in 1812 the United States of America found themselves dependent for their war supplies and munitions upon Europe. "You will never catch us in that fix again," said one patriotic American. And nobody ever has.

But we English have made precisely this mistake in peace, to our abiding injury and disgrace. At the outbreak of the war we discovered that we could not do without German dyes for our textiles. Though aniline

dyes had been invented by an Englishman, our "organizers of industry" had allowed the whole business to slip away into the hands of the manufacturers of the Fatherland and their highly-skilled chemists, until now they have a monopoly, which, it appears, we are unable to supplement by home productions, after nearly a year of war and with great help from the Government. Even if protection could encourage the foundation of factories on a sufficiently large scale, it is doubtful whether they could be upheld against German patents and improved processes. So far also we have declined to make adequate use of our own men of science in this particular line. This is one fine instance of fatuity. The manufacture of optical glasses is another, and there are plenty more. Nor let us forget that Germany, even if she loses Alsace-Lorraine, Schleswig-Holstein, and Poland, will still possess a population larger and far better organized than our own.

But after the war, allowing a comparatively short period for national recovery, Germany will, I am confident, become a more formidable competitor than ever. Her press, which like her General Staff is well aware that an inconclusive peace is the best that Germany can now expect, threatens us with this already. God, the

German God, no longer of battles but of markets, will punish England by depriving her of the means of selling her goods against a rival who produces commodities better and cheaper. Sordid but effective. This is a very serious danger. The more thoroughly Germany is beaten, the more stringent the restrictions which may be placed upon her warlike reconstruction, the heavier the indemnities she may be forced to pay, the more terrible her loss of capital, just so much fiercer will her competition become. The flood of commercialism and militarism may have stunted her genius and cramped her philosophy, but in appropriation and development of inventions, as well as in initiative and astuteness, she has no superior if any equal. This stupendous energy and power of organization has hitherto been largely devoted to the military and naval preparations that have astonished the world. After peace is proclaimed, all the national resources thus used unproductively for war will be thrown into the struggles of peace. Even her loss of men will in a few years be compensated by the new generation bred up for victory in the most strenuous, pacific antagonism ever known. All this British manufacturers and merchants and workers will have to meet and contend against ; for it is too much to hope that what-

ever political and economic success democrats and Socialists may have in Germany when the war is over, they will be able to bring about a Social Revolution which will put competition on the shelf. We must therefore be ready to face the worst, and that worst is unfortunately or fortunately due not so much to Germany's strength as to our own self-sufficient weakness.

The governing class of this country has much to answer for. Germany has no great natural advantages over Great Britain. On the contrary, in geographical position, in climate, in general fertility, in mineral resources the United Kingdom is on the whole more advantageously placed. Nor would our population be in any way inferior to hers if only its members were all living under decent conditions, were well-fed, well-educated, and well-trained physically from their childhood upwards. But this is precisely what millions of them admittedly are not. The health, strength, vigour, intelligence, organization, and discipline of our youth, male and female, is not a matter with us of national concern. *Laissez-faire*, happy-go-lucky, and devil-take-the-hindmost, are still, for the most part, our ideas of management. The survival of the fittest is assumed to mean that the fittest must survive, hideous as the degeneracy of our huge

masses of slum-dwellers may be. A nation which is organized for efficiency will always in the long run beat a nation which leaves things to chance, however imperfect and even detestable the government of the more efficient nation may be.

Englishmen hate to be told of their shortcomings. They do not show this so much by their opposition to what they hear and read as by their determined indifference to the truth. But the time has come when the truth will be forced upon them in a very ugly way, and they will have to admit among other things that the mischiefs bred of generations of apathy and neglect cannot be remedied all of a sudden to meet a set of circumstances that ought long ago to have been foreseen and prepared for. We are learning by sad experience what we have to encounter in war: let us understand as soon as possible what we shall have to encounter in peace.

What then is wrong with ourselves as compared with the Germans? The list of our defects is a long and a sad one. Nor should we permit the prejudices born of the monstrous misdoings of the Germans to blind us to its importance in regard to the coming time.

Education. Our primary education is very defective and it certainly has not improved

since School Boards were abolished and Education was put in the same category of municipal management and payment as paving, lighting, draining, etc. The old School Board with its cumulative vote, gave an opportunity for men and women who were enthusiastic on the subject of education and its improvement to exercise a direct and beneficial influence far in excess of the mere numbers of people they represented by vote.

Take a borough I happen to have known intimately for thirty years. There one member of the School Board was practically the Municipal Minister of Education. He so animated and pushed on his colleagues that the Board Schools of Burnley were on the high road to emulating the Swiss schools in their efficiency. When the change was made, and *ad hoc* representation on the School Board was done away with, then Councillor Dan Irving lost a great deal of his influence as an educational reformer, and the effect of the cost of education upon the rates was much more considered than before. Consequently the reforms which he had initiated and pushed forward were checked. What occurred in Burnley, to my own personal knowledge and under my own eyes, I believe has occurred frequently elsewhere. I am aware that Sir

Philip Magnus and other honest optimists declare that we have nothing to learn from Germany and Switzerland in primary or secondary or technical education. I can only state here plainly that this is not the opinion of men and women teachers known to me, who are by no means satisfied with the sort of education which they have to give. The teaching of foreign languages is systematically neglected. Is that the case in Germany and Switzerland? And how can men keep themselves abreast of European progress when ignorant of all foreign languages?

Technical education has improved of late years. But it is still by no means sufficient for the needs of our industries. If it is, why are Germans and Swiss so commonly found in positions which would certainly be filled by equally well qualified Englishmen were they to be had? I could give instance after instance from private experience where Swiss and Germans were engaged, not because they were to be had on lower terms but because Englishmen of equal capacity could not be obtained on any terms. True, our employers of labour are too often neglectful of science, they hesitate to adopt new methods, and are disinclined to suit themselves to the needs of their customers; but, when all is said, the

present war shows plainly enough that Great Britain depends for what we may call the daily bread supply of practical trained chemists and other men of science upon countries where the so-called "secondary" education is much better than our own.

All our higher education is still very expensive and the opportunities afforded and the appliances provided are by no means what they ought to be. I hold no brief for American billionaires. Far from it. Their vast accumulations wholly unprecedented in the history of the world have been obtained from the legal and illegal expropriation of the labour of the American workers. But they have to a considerable extent done for the United States what the State has done for Germany, and in some instances on even a larger scale. Great Britain enjoys neither billionaire subsidies for special objects nor State assistance towards definite ends. All true education must come from above under the conditions of to-day. The slum-dwellers would not grumble if there were no education at all. Even skilled workers make no effective demand for the sort of education they and their children ought to get.

But our great Universities, which should take the lead in such matters, are regarded and

regard themselves as little better than social preserves for the sons of the well-to-do. Commerce is looked down upon there and industry despised. Oxford and Cambridge are still entirely out of touch with the mass of the people. Can we imagine them heading a serious demand upon the national government for the real democratization of their colleges and their endowments? However much we may be convinced that competition is harmful, so long as it exists, efficiency is essential. And in the development of such efficiency the old Universities have neither part nor lot. They are not, in fact, in any sense National institutions. A root and branch national reform is needed in education and training, which will never be undertaken so long as Oxford and Cambridge men dominate the House of Commons and perpetuate the old traditions. Business science, industrial science, are "bad form." We shall not hold our own with Germany in competition, nor develop our own Great Britain into co-operation, along these lines. But, unfortunately, the necessary reforms take time, and we have hardly begun our reconstruction.

Physical development. This also is a subject which has been systematically neglected for more than a hundred years. True, we

are just beginning to see what we have done by our apathy in the direction of breeding degeneration and are trying to put matters right. But this again takes time and calls for much more radical methods than we have yet seen fit to adopt. There are no slum areas in Germany which in any way compare with ours in misery and degradation, while the children of the nation are far better cared for than with us. Our just indignation against the Germans, on account of their hideous misdeeds and atrocities in this war, must not blind us to the lessons they have given us in this direction.

Health and physical vigour are as important to a nation in peace and in trade as they are in a great campaign: as important for the country at large as for the individuals who make up its population. Other things being equal, the people who have the best physical development will be most capable of receiving the best mental training. There is no serious national or municipal effort being made here to remedy those social conditions which are directly calculated to produce permanent degeneration. I can discern little improvement in this respect as compared with the state of things I well remember in Lancashire and Yorkshire sixty years ago. It

may be true, as Sir John Ray Lankester contended against me in the *Times* some years past, that no matter how great the deterioration might apparently be, the basis, the *stirps*, of the race is physiologically sound. A pleasing theory. But nobody would breed from horses, or cattle, or dogs, whose dams and sires had manifestly deteriorated; how can we expect better results from children begotten from etiolated parents whose physical inferiority is the outcome of several generations of life in bad surroundings?

The point can only be decided by experiment. Remove the children from their horrible environment and all will rejoice if they show no inferiority to other young folk begotten under more favourable circumstances, and their children in turn develop into sound healthy citizens. This is a matter of crucial importance, quite apart from German competition and the conquest of world markets.

But any such step as State organization for health must cut at the roots of the Upas tree grown in the soil of the old scurvy individualist doctrines of "*laissez-faire*," "supply and demand," "the survival of the fittest," "self-help," and the other rottenness and corruption of profiteering economics. There is no conception of true individual or national

greatness in all this devil-take-the-hindmost anarchy. It has developed distrust of system, thoroughness and organization throughout the nation, from which we have been and are suffering to an extent not even now fully appreciated. The Germans, coming much later into the field of capitalism at the period when all this "Manchesterthum" had been exposed in theory and was exhibiting its shortcomings in practice, never allowed these harmful conceptions of the ends and objects of the production of wealth to dominate their entire national policy as we did.

One serious outcome of our views has been that "Free Trade" has connoted for us, until lately, almost entire absence of Government aid or co-ordination for anything in the shape of national enterprise. Even when, horrified at the quagmire of indiscipline and incompetence in which we had landed ourselves, we set to work to try and remedy matters, we have done so by imitating the very worst forms of German economic and social polity. We have created within five or six years a nominated, costly, irresponsible, and—worse than all—wholly untrained and dictatorial bureaucracy, wholly independent of any democratic control. This huge army of jacks-in-office has undertaken at a stroke the administration of newly-created

departments which they are quite incompetent to administer. The Insurance Act, the Labour Exchanges, the wasteful Inquisitorial surveys and the like are Teutonic only in their despotic rigour. The compensating advantages of direct State control have been largely eliminated. That Ministers who enjoy far higher salaries than are paid in other countries should be trustees of the national property is an idea that has never yet been accepted in Great Britain—least of all by Ministers themselves. Efficiency in administration is the last qualification which entitles a politician to a seat in the Cabinet, or to lasting influence when he has attained that seat. Persons who have achieved this distinction may be the most conspicuous failures in department after department, the laughing-stocks of the permanent officials and the contempt of all who know. But each takes for his motto of everlasting incapacity not of brilliant success *J'y suis j'y reste*. And there he sticks to his salary, regardless of the interest of the nation. Case after case of this interminable fatuity might be cited, but the name of Mr. Reginald M'Kenna has been happily chosen by fate to reduce the whole business to absurdity. His indispensable ineptitude has been a joy to foreign nations, and is so still. But Liberals

and Radicals have no monopoly of such unsuitable appointments. Unionists compete with them on equal terms in this organized preference for expensive mediocrity.

What is true of Cabinet Ministers likewise holds good of our Ambassadors, in all matters of business. They may be masters of political diplomacy. Of that I am not speaking. They absolutely refuse, no doubt under strict orders from the Foreign Office, to lend any help to Englishmen in business, no matter how important it may be to show zeal in this direction—even from the political point of view. The full story of the feebleness of our commercial and financial work at Constantinople as compared with that of Marschall von Biberstein, would go far to explain why tens of thousands of lives and many valuable vessels have been lost at the Dardanelles. And what is true of our apathy and indifference at Stamboul is equally true, though in a less degree, of other capitals, such as Sofia, Bucharest, and Athens.

Not until the national resources and national agencies are systematically used to aid national industry and to extend national commerce in every direction, and encouragement is given by the State to initiative and efficiency in every department, shall we cease to conduct our competition with Germany at a great disad-

vantage. And, I repeat, I write this as a Social-Democrat who regards all such national energy and organization as only a step towards ensuring our position in order to be able the sooner to transform all our trade into a complete system of national and international co-operation.

But again, in such crucial matters as transport and banking, we are behind the times. This is quite inexcusable. England had the first-fruits of modern development in both. The most serious defects are in our methods of transport. Our railways are the most remarkable instance of protection in favour of the foreigner ever known. I am no bigot in the matter of protection of industry. I know well that in order to build up a department of manufacture, to encourage the cultivation of certain necessary grain or roots in agriculture, to recover trade lost by false principles in finance, to establish shipping successfully against rivals, direct protection or national aid and bonuses may be required. But it is childish to talk about this as a system to be adopted, however successful it has been and is in Germany, France, America, and our own Colonies, however successful it actually was with our own Navigation Laws, and in competition with Indian manufactured

cotton in days gone by, until we have put things so far right at home that we are not, by such protection, stereotyping ancient methods and filling the pockets of the landlord and capitalist at the expense of the propertyless and disinherited wage-slaves.

When our whole transport system is re-organized, it will be time to discuss how far it is necessary to protect our industry and agriculture in the transition period onwards to the Co-operative Commonwealth. So long ago as 1892 I gave evidence before the Royal Labour Commission on this matter of our monstrous railway methods as compared with the United States and Germany. It would take a book larger than this little volume to recount adequately our deficiencies. If the cost of haulage is maintained it is useless to talk of effective competition with Germany. Even now the weight of trucks as compared with paying freight is to a great extent disregarded ; heavy, old, unserviceable private wagons are hauled quite regardless of cost, full or empty ; differential rates against English producers are still upheld ; and it costs several times more to haul goods a mile in Great Britain, quite apart from interest on debentures, than in the two countries named. But the railways constitute a monopoly, the

Companies have about a fifth of the House of Commons as their paid Directors and their servants, kept lawyers and experts with any amount of the shareholders' money behind them, are ugly foes to face. Consequently no effective reforms have been made for a quarter of a century at least, and when nationalization of railways comes to be discussed in earnest, the nation will be defrauded, with the aid and connivance of both political factions, unless a few determined and independent men—rare birds in political regions—force the House of Commons to act honestly in the matter.

Nevertheless, cheap transport at cost on the railways, co-ordinated with motor transport on first-rate motor roads, would give an uplift to national industry and agriculture in the United Kingdom such as the world has never yet seen. The sooner this is set about the better. This Government has the greatest opportunity that ever was offered to any administration.

Of our Banking system it is scarcely necessary to speak. Since the great Joint Stock Banks were carefully saved from bankruptcy, or from absolutely ruinous calls upon their shareholders, by the perversion of national credit to their assistance, at the commencement of

the war, even Bank Managers have somewhat moderated their tone. But the fact that we possess an inelastic, unsound and unsuitable method of banking as compared with certain modernized and energetic foreign institutions, whose competition was being keenly felt in the City of London, cannot be disputed.

The wonder to me, therefore, is that with all these self-inflicted drawbacks to encounter and overcome, we have been able to hold our own even as far as we have done. Yet German trade has only become dangerous as a competitive agency during the last thirty years. It has been a marvellously rapid growth, based upon deliberate, skilled management. Her increasing success in the world market has been due to careful adaptation of means to ends, unceasing industry, thorough education, and admirable discipline. The nation went out to fight its commercial war as a war, and spared no pains to ensure victory. Englishmen with their individualism carried to extremes, were far better pioneers, but they were surrendering much of what had been gained by their initiative, even in our own colonies, to the nationally organized forces of their competitors.

In the huge military war of the trenches now going on, it is much the same. What the British troops have won they have won

by coolness, daring, vigour, and general pluck. Their appliances have been insufficient and inferior. We are still behind the enemy in our provision of these modern essentials.

It is noteworthy, however, in looking over the list of our own defects—with a view, not so much to the ambitious project of capturing German trade, as to the defence of our own—that improvement in nearly every case must be a slow process. Thus, assuming even that the obstructionists were overcome, and our common schools were made thoroughly effective all over the country, some years must elapse before the effect of the change could be felt in the domain of commerce. There is, for obvious reasons, no short cut to national development in this direction.

Similarly with secondary and scientific education. That is a matter of years. The education must not only be thorough in these departments, but cheap. In Germany it is both cheap and thorough. At Freiburg, Karlsruhe, or Strasburg and many other Universities fees are very much lower than in this country, and the teaching is superior. Unfortunately, a better state of things cannot be improvised at will. Inefficient and expensive methods are not easily corrected, nor are good and cheap ones rapidly popularized.

But what is true of education applies to nearly all the other points. Adequate and efficient transformation takes time to accomplish. Men and women already in good health and fair vigour can be made more healthy and more vigorous by capable training. Where, however, city populations have become etiolated by their surroundings, a full generation is needed to remedy the mischief.

Only in finance and transport can any speedy and sound improvement be made. And both of these depend upon national, by which is inevitably meant Government, action. So far national credit and advances have only been used to help to maintain what I hold to be, from any point of view, a harmful system. But I venture to predict that, before we are in a position to cope with the task ahead of us, the national resources will have to be brought to the support of the great co-operative societies in the realm of production, and that the organized forces of labour must be fully represented in any scheme of reconstruction.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARMED NATION

I. VOLUNTARY ARMY AND CONSCRIPTION.

IT is unfortunate that the arduous task of a Coalition which, with no active Opposition in the House of Commons, controls the destinies of this country and the Empire, should be complicated from the first with suggested radical changes in the method of raising the national Army. The difficulty, not to say the danger, of introducing compulsory military service without a Dissolution of Parliament or a Referendum to the whole people must be obvious to all. Minister after Minister of the new Government, including Lord Kitchener himself, has declared, since the commencement of the war, that voluntary recruiting would suffice for all our needs. Yet, before a year has passed, the toll of killed, wounded, and missing has been so great, and threatens to be so much greater, that we are now almost

prepared to see the voluntary principle of enlistment supplanted by a much more drastic system of obtaining the necessary men. Full proof of this need must be forthcoming ere the crucial change is made, for it is already certain that on this point the people at large will require very strong evidence indeed.¹

Nothing has amazed Europe more than the eagerness and enthusiasm with which hundreds of thousands of the cream of the working classes of Great Britain, skilled Trade Unionists in receipt of high wages, with the prospect of continuous employment during the war, have rushed to the recruiting stations; and nothing finer has been seen in all the hateful glories of war than the manner in which these volunteer troops, British and Colonial alike, have behaved in Flanders and France since they were driven back by overwhelming numbers in August, 1914. We are now forced by policy, as well as by pressure from our own Allies, to conduct the war upon land on the Continental scale, and to maintain the command of the seas as well. For this purpose, we are told, nothing but compulsory service

¹ Great as are the drawbacks to voluntary recruiting, it cannot be disputed that, so far, it has provided the country, during the present war, with more men than the Government could clothe, equip, and supply with munitions.

will now adequately provide. Voluntary enlistment could not furnish enough men to arrest the German invasion, and is at this moment alleged to be insufficient to ensure a triumphant issue to the war.

This last statement alone, when substantiated by facts, is enough to condemn volunteering, seeing that England is determined that Germany and her confederates shall be completely beaten, and beaten within a reasonable time. But the drawbacks to the volunteer system itself are numerous. I have heard the strongest advocates of peace declare that they would prefer even wholesale conscription to our existing means of getting men. It is the most unfair plan of obtaining soldiers for the national service that has ever been tried. The active, the self-sacrificing, the patriotic, come forward. The lazy, the selfish, the apathetic (just those who could best be spared) stay behind. It would be hard to show, also, that under our conditions of to-day the well-to-do are contributing their fair share of personal sacrifice to the national cause. Why, then, should the timid or indifferent or selfish be able to rely upon their more courageous or more conscientious countrymen to do their fighting for them?

Moreover, though the majority of those who

enlist do so of their own free will, it is well known that, since the war began, very stern economic pressure has been brought to bear by private agency in order to obtain recruits. I myself know of very many cases in which practically no choice has been left to men of suitable age between starvation and enlistment. There was no national compulsion; they were forced to go by private effort.

The voluntary army, Regulars and Territorials, is a class army. It is officered almost exclusively by the well-to-do. This is wholly undemocratic and bad in every way. It enables the army, though manned by the relatives of the workers, to be used on the side of the employers against those same workers in civil differences, when any local magnate chooses to think that military intervention is desirable. Soldiers in England, therefore, with their voluntary enlistment, are more a military section apart from the bulk of the industrial population than they are in France, where all classes are liable to serve, and officers come largely from the ranks. And the lengthy period of barrack discipline under our arrangements is even more prejudicial than it is with the three years' limit in France, which was in process of reduction to two years when

the war broke out. "Single men in barracks don't grow up as plaster saints." Whatever we may take that to mean, barrack life is a bad life for free and equal men, whether the men are recruited voluntarily or not. It is injurious to health, morals, and general citizen virtues. Apart, therefore, from the contention that our entire military system—Regular Army, Territorials, and all—is proving unequal to meet the strain of this terrific war, I contend that there are enough inherent drawbacks in it to justify a complete reorganization on other grounds.

When this statement is made in so many words it is, as a rule, taken for granted that the only alternative to voluntary service thus criticized is Conscription in the Continental sense. But, as a Social-Democrat, I am as much opposed to Conscription as I am to our upper - class - officered Army. So are all Socialists and Democrats. Even in Germany, where nearly the whole people seems to have gone mad for the time being, there is no love for Conscription. Far from it. The feeling against it grows every year. No wonder ; the marvel is that a highly educated and capable folk, such as the inhabitants of the Fatherland undoubtedly are, should put themselves continually at the mercy of the Prussian

militarist caste, with its Kaiser and its Federal Council. The whole population has been ruthlessly militarized. The mass of the workers, as in other countries, provide the rank and file which furnishes the ordinary food for powder; but in every well-to-do household there are perforce members of the family who look to their career in the army, during their early years of manhood, as the indispensable stepping-stone to any success, civil or military. They all take their tone as officers from their Junker superiors, whose standards of humanity and culture we know. The atrocities committed by their orders in Belgium and France in war were led up to by the brutalities of Zabern and other military districts in peace. Common soldiers under conscript training were treated habitually as no decent man would think of treating his dogs. Ruffianism and cruelty were inculcated as high martial virtues.

Those who ventured to expose these widespread militarist horrors were indicted as criminals and thrown into gaol. The officers who were guilty of infamous conduct to their subordinates and civilians were supported by their commanders and promoted by the Government. Criticism spelt high treason. All who know, as I do, a little of what Conscription means in Germany, will be firmly resolved

that, while they can resist it, peaceably or forcibly, compulsory service on the German plan shall never be introduced into Great Britain. Men under arms forfeit their rights as citizens and possess no rights as soldiers, yet they are so overmastered by crushing discipline and so fired with spurious patriotism that they are now fighting to dominate and oppress others as scarce any troops have ever fought to emancipate themselves. A dangerous system indeed.

Moreover, the training in barracks, as carried on to-day, has, in the opinion of cool and expert native observers, greatly helped to corrupt morality among the well-to-do class in all the great German cities. The old decency and purity have almost evaporated. Things are far worse in this respect in the Fatherland than in other civilized countries. Brutality has bred bestiality. Scandals such as those exposed in the infamous Zu Eulenburg case have in certain high circles completely ceased to be scandalous. In Berlin alone the number of unseemly houses devoted to such practices is appalling. The police, completely informed and powerful as they are, dare not use their powers to deal strictly with these offences, because of the wide ramifications of sexual perversity they would reveal if they did. *Corruptio optimi*

pessima. A sudden access of wealth and luxury may have increased this atavistic tendency ; but the de-citizenized and brutalized barrack life is the main factor in the rapid lowering of that high domestic character which was formerly the pride of the nation. The militarist caste has shown itself to the world for two generations more and more immoral and more and more ruthless. This is no accident.

Against such moral deterioration must be set off the strong interest of the dominant class and the nation at large in securing thorough physical efficiency for all males in order that their soldierly qualities may be in no wise handicapped by lack of health, strength, and endurance at the critical time. This consideration is constantly kept in view from one end of Germany to the other. Part of the greatly superior physique noticeable throughout the Fatherland, as compared with our own population, is doubtless due to the fact that the industrial workers have been drafted much more recently from the country into the towns. But the steady efforts continuously made, under official authority, to fight against the harmful influences of urban life upon children and young people, have ensured health and vigour in a way which we are

only just beginning to recognize and slowly to imitate.

The organization, discipline, physical care, and training, due in the main to compulsory service, are also useful to workers not engaged in their military duties. All the British working-class delegates who attended the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart a few years ago were greatly impressed by the splendid appearance and imposing bearing of the tens of thousands of German workmen who marched in solid military array to the open-air meeting which was addressed by the late August Bebel and speakers of all nationalities. I confess that, as I rose myself to address the vast crowd around the platform, I looked with some sadness upon their fine physical development. I knew that nowhere in all our island could I speak to so large a body of men, of any political section or party, who would make such a magnificent showing, or who would manifest such perfect organization and discipline of their own accord and in their own cause. Conscription does help to develop the force of a nation and of its people. Yet Conscription on the German method would be a curse to our country, and these same kindly and noble-looking Suabian Social-Democrats are fighting to-day, against

their principles, to strengthen and expand a domination they detest. They don't love Conscription, nevertheless. That is certain.

In France, also, the growing feeling is opposed to compulsion in its present form. It is accepted, so far, only because it is believed to be an unavoidable necessity if the nation is to maintain its independence and uphold its position in Europe. Yet there is no aristocratic militarist caste in Republican France, nor have the reactionists had much success in their endeavours to create one during the war. The French army is a democratic army, its officers largely rise from the ranks, and the tendency is towards still further democratization. As it stands, even with the three years' service, the method of Conscription is fair for all classes, and the French troops produced under it have shown themselves fully the equals of their forbears in valour, and superior to them in cool persistence under great discouragement. Still, Conscription is very unpopular. The barrack life is admitted to be harmful, the three years' training is bitterly opposed as excessive and too continuous for citizens, the placing of the national army at the autocratic disposal of the political faction in power is strongly objected to, the tendency in high military quarters and

the military Press to speak and write of soldiers as being of more value to the country than civilians is denounced as reactionary. Conscription, even in France, has a militarizing influence. Citizenship is too often sneered at by superior persons as derogatory. Wrong ideals of human culture are maintained. The danger of a great and successful soldier setting himself up as the heir of Napoleonism is ever before the eyes of French democrats. Intrigues to obtain control of the army, which have been more frequent than some imagine, are feared and resented. The sinister influence of priests and the Catholic sisterhoods is resented. And the Dreyfus case, though now being forgotten, proved that the clerical section of the General Staff would stick at nothing to crush a man who was regarded as opposed to and menacing their influence. Thus, prior to the war, the existing compulsory service was becoming more unpopular daily, and the propaganda carried on by my lamented friend, the late Jean Jaurés, and the whole Socialist Party in *l'Humanité* and elsewhere in favour of "La Nation Armée," was persuading many who were opposed to Socialism that a system of national military organization might be introduced which would well suffice to defend *la Patrie* without professional militarism in any form.

II. THE DEMOCRATIC CITIZEN ARMY.

"Tutti Soldati e nessun' Soldato."—*Giuseppe Mazzini*.

"It is for you to urge upon all the necessity of placing yourselves in the position of an armed nation—a nation such as the Swiss—whose strength lies not in its numbers or in its military organisation, but in the spirit of those who love their country and are prepared to die for it."—*The late Lord Salisbury*.

"In a democratic nation every citizen must be a soldier, and every soldier a citizen."

If, then, voluntary enlistment has already proved inadequate for the position which we have now taken up in European politics, and is beside inequitable and disadvantageous to the mass of the people; if, also, Conscription is, in many respects, objectionable and unsuited to Englishmen, in spite of the advantages already referred to above; then the problem is, how to establish a thoroughly efficient national army in which all males are obliged to serve from their youth upwards, yet in which there exists no class supremacy; military law is unnecessary, and every soldier enjoys, except during active warfare, his full civilian rights. Only under such conditions can the population of Great Britain be induced to accept such an interference with their personal liberty as the obligation imposed upon every active man to place himself under military discipline and fight for his country if called upon.

The success hitherto achieved by voluntary recruiting in this war is being cited to show that better pay and better general conditions for those who join the Army will suffice to secure by volunteer recruiting as many fresh men as we want. When we consider the ridiculous pay of the common soldier there is something to be said for this contention. But it is difficult to see why merely by paying others to fight for him, or by contributing a fine for non-training and non-service, any man should be able to shift on to his neighbour his own personal duty to defend the country in which he enjoys the full rights and exercises the privileges of a citizen. The system of a mercenary army is allowed by common consent to be a bad system.

In Great Britain, however, there exists a considerable number of people who are not only convinced advocates of peace—we are all pacifists, except a few furious jingos, I presume—but who are bitterly opposed to training under arms of any kind. They uphold the brotherhood of man, as Socialists do, but they refuse to see, even now, that the huge conscript armies of Europe are not maintained for the purpose of inculcating the delights of fraternity. These well-meaning folk look with horror at the voluntary boy-scouts movement,

which they cannot check, but they do not see that the only alternative to this sort of unlicensed militarism is that the State should undertake all such education in the duties of national defence. Their fear of Continental Conscription drives them to advocate voluntary enlistment, where they are obliged to support some sort of army, and thus places military power in the hands of a class instead of at the disposal of the country at large.

At International Congress after International Congress, Continental Socialists who know well what Conscription means, and who are thoroughly versed in the English voluntary system, have voted unanimously in favour of a democratic national citizen army, in which all grown-up males should be at one and the same time both soldiers and citizens, in which offenders against civil or military discipline should be dealt with by civil courts, in which also the officers who had proved their qualifications should be elected by ballot of the men over whom they should command. An army thus recruited and thus organized for national defence would be entirely free from any chauvinist bias or militarist fervour. Being kept in constant contact with civil life and exercising continuously their rights of voting as citizens, they would all be too greatly interested

in avoiding war to indulge in any haphazard ventures, or to allow others to enter into them on their behalf. To be unprepared is to court war when other Powers are ready to carry out a hostile policy ; whereas to be ready for defensive war is the best chance of ensuring peace.

That being the general view of democrats and Socialists, at least one democratic body in Great Britain has never failed for many years to bring this proposal forward at the Trade Union Congresses. There it has been consistently opposed year after year—on the ground that the working classes had nothing to do with military affairs and could never be drawn into war under any circumstances—by the very same men who began rushing through the country in August, 1914, as Members of Parliament, in the capacity of red-hot recruiting agents, and are at the same work still. This is the only possible solution of the question of national defence that combines the responsibility of universal training for war against an aggressive nation, with the preservation of our ancestral freedoms. I have been of that opinion ever since I discussed the matter with old Mazzini himself so long ago as 1867.

When the old and valuable volunteer corps

had been disbanded and the militia done away with, our plan of a democratic citizen army, was brought to the front as against Lord Haldane's objectionable Territorial Act, which placed a large force of voluntary recruited men under military discipline with the liability to be used under class officers against their own countrymen. A Citizen Service Bill was drawn up and put forward by Mr. William Thorne, M.P. for West Ham. It fell quite dead. Nobody would listen to such a proposal—such a “jingo” proposal—as that all the sound and capable men, of the 8,000,000 and more in Great Britain of military age, should be trained to the use of arms for the defence of their country! The Government was utterly scared at such a democratic suggestion; the people were horrified at the idea of creating an army which should be at their own control in peace and in war. Lord Haldane, therefore, had his way. Unluckily, Lord Roberts, who rightly opposed the bootless Territorial scheme, was as much opposed to a *democratic* citizen army as Lord Haldane was, and told me so quite plainly himself when I put the matter to him some years later. The Territorials were set on foot, and from the first proved a failure. Had our plan of general military training, compulsory upon

all, been adopted in 1907, we should not have been caught contemptibly unready to support a national policy last August.¹

A democratic army, all whose soldiers remain citizens, necessarily involves short periods of training for the great majority of those who serve. Military authorities, for the most part, urge that this is a fatal mistake, and that the troops who would be available under such conditions would stand no chance of winning against Regulars in any field of warfare to-day. This argument has been greatly weakened by what has taken place in France and Flanders, if we are to believe the flattering reports of the short-service, recently-trained men that reach us steadily from the front. Thus we are assured that men enlisted and trained since Lord Kitchener went to the War Office have shown themselves fully capable of meeting and defeating the best forces Germany, with

¹ At this period the Social-Democratic Federation was exceptionally active in agitating for a democratic Citizen Army. Pamphlets by the late H. Quelch and Sergeant-Major Edmondson, articles by the Swiss artilleryman, M. Moch, in the *Social Democrat*, Mr. W. Thorne's draft Bill, as well as reprints of comments from *Justice*, were widely distributed. Speeches were also made to large audiences all over the country. But the people had got it into their heads that Great Britain needed no considerable army, and that if they themselves were armed they would be forced to fight without their own consent; which is just what a real Citizen Army renders impossible.

all its conscription, could bring against them. Yet the Canadians, as well as our own men, were trained not in barracks but in camp, and certainly could not be taken as examples in favour of the current militarist contention. The test of war is the supreme test, after all, and not only the Canadians, but the Australians, under Sir Ian Hamilton—a most vehement upholder of our existing system—at the Dardanelles seem to be passing it with triumphant success. There is nothing in recent events certainly to silence advocates of a general citizen force manned by all of military age for the defence of the country at home, or, if judged essential by democratic vote, for action on the Continent of Europe.

The South African War of fifteen years ago is an example of what may be done against a first-rate army under highly capable commanders by a much smaller force of purely citizen soldiers. Looked at rightly, that war ought to have taught us all a lesson. The Boers were fighting, of course, under totally different conditions from those which prevail in Europe to-day, but they had adapted themselves perfectly to those conditions, not by mechanical drill, or mass formations, but by precisely that sort of personal experience and individual practice blending into action by

brigade and company, which those who best understand what citizen service means advocate for their men.

There is, however, far stronger evidence at hand as to what the South African citizen army is really capable of in the masterly campaign organized, conducted, and carried out by General Botha, first against some of the best of his old subordinates in revolt, and afterwards against the Germans of South-West Africa, who had been preparing assiduously for this war for years, and did not think it possible they could fail. The difficulties were much greater than we English at home have realized, our attention being fully taken up with the tremendous struggle going on all round us here in Europe. But they have been triumphantly surmounted by a citizen army commanded by a citizen general—that is to say, by free and equal men fighting for their country and their liberties against the threatening domination of Prussia. The politicians and journalists who have been praising President Botha to the skies for his far-seeing patriotism and faultless strategy must already be half-converted to the support of an army similar to the victorious troops they so much admire, but modified, naturally, to suit an industrial instead of a pastoral and mining community.

These South Africans as democrats have shown too, "the spirit of those who love their country and are ready to die for it."

It is reasonable to add that, while not having the very slightest claim to be an expert in military affairs, and writing throughout simply as a civilian, I have personally very good grounds for mistrust of untrained or half-trained troops when opposed by thorough soldiers, even in a district well suited to guerilla warfare. Patriotism, enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, courage, and devotion will not make up for the absence of knowledge, experience, and physical training, for service in war. The success achieved by Garibaldi on the flank of the French Army in Italy before the battle of Solferino, the victory of the Thousand of Marsala, the overthrow of the domination of Bomba on the mainland misled us as to the value of irregular troops when employed in scientific warfare on any considerable scale. This I witnessed myself in the Tyrol in 1866 when a force of Kaiser-Jägers never exceeding 1,250 at any time held in check ten times their number of Italian volunteers supported by some batteries of the admirable Piedmontese artillery. The spirit and valour of the Italians was unquestionable. They lacked the discipline, steadiness, and confidence of trained troops.

The Swiss Army, because it combines the advantage of all existing methods of military training, while at the same time strengthening instead of weakening the forces of democracy, is the best model for the reorganization of our own army during the war and afterwards in peace. In Switzerland we have the full programme of a democratic citizen army completely carried out—except that during the actual period of service, even in peace, the citizen soldier is under military discipline instead of being, as I suggest, subject only to the common law. The training for the defence of the country really begins in the schools. The Swiss education is, on the whole, the best in Europe, not even excepting that of Germany. This is rightly regarded as the indispensable groundwork of modern democracy, and that it should have been established under such difficult geographical conditions among a people and in a Republic comprising several races and languages, and professing more than one religion, is strong evidence of the common sense of a free, democratic community whose political and social interests and development are the concern of all the persons who constitute it. Switzerland spends twice as much on education as she does on her army, while, prior to the war, England's Army cost seven

times as much as her entire educational expenditure. And this disparity is not secured to the Swiss advantage by any cheeseparing in the matter of national defence.

All Swiss children are not only well taught intellectually and morally in the common schools, and provided, as they grow up, with admirable institutions for higher education and special acquirements; they are also well trained physically in gymnastics and all sorts of exercises and games which develop their health and strength and prepare them for the duties they will later have to perform and the exertions they must undergo. Thus from their boyhood on to youth and manhood the Swiss grow into good soldiers as they learn how to become good citizens. They understand throughout what they must do, why they will have to do it, and the value of their country to them, as well as of themselves to their country. The lads who are free from any natural physical defect therefore reach the age of seventeen quite as vigorous and far more satisfactorily educated mentally and physically than the best specimens of the middle class in Great Britain at the same age. From the first the nation recognizes in theory and in practice that the bodily and mental vigour of every boy and lad who will proceed to

the full rights and duties of citizenship is the concern not merely of his parents and relations, or even of himself, but of the whole Republic, which relies upon him, and becomes in turn responsible for him in after years.

At seventeen all youths join the second reserve or Landsturm, where they receive their first technical military training. This Landsturm, apart from these active lads, consists of men past their prime who have gone through their first two periods of service. Under the Army reorganization law of 1907—what time we were tinkering with lawyer Haldane's Territorialism—all male citizens join the Active Army (l'Elite) from their nineteenth to their thirty-second year. This is the cream of the Swiss Army, a force of remarkable vigour and capacity. Yet the duration of training, though very strict and even severe, is surprisingly short. The total period of service or training in the first year was forty-five days for the infantry, fifty days for the engineers, fifty-five days for the artillery, and eighty days for the cavalry. Non-commissioned officers and officers serve for considerably longer periods.

This naturally seems to militarists, who are devoted to the old methods, a wholly insufficient length of training for men to become trustworthy soldiers in any real sense of those

words. But they are quite mistaken. The Swiss take nothing for granted in this crucial matter of efficiency. Every year one half of the Active Army and a quarter of the Landwehr (citizens between thirty-two and forty-four) is mobilized and thoroughly tested in manœuvres. Nothing approaching to this is attempted in any conscript country.

Instance after instance has been given of the extraordinary activity and endurance of the men. Nearly twenty years ago a French General of the highest ability declared, after having been present at the Swiss manœuvres: "Alone among European nations Switzerland has solved the problem we have all attempted in vain—to arm all its citizens and to make of each citizen a soldier." There is good reason to believe the Swiss Army is even better to-day than it was in 1896, and that its soldiers are in every respect equal to any troops in Europe. For mountain warfare they are probably superior to all but the French Alpine regiments and the Piedmontese Bersaglieri. The Swiss artillery and cavalry, the two arms most difficult to improvise, are also second to none, the cavalry being supplemented by picked forces of cyclists. Instances are given of mountain batteries of artillery which marched for twelve days and manœuvred for five, cover-

ing no fewer than 340 kilometres (more than 200 miles) in perfect order through mountains in mid-winter. They marched over twenty-five miles the first day. Yet not one of the officers or men was a permanent soldier. The day before the march they were simple citizens. And these batteries were no exceptions to the others or picked in any way, nor are the Swiss specially qualified as artillerymen.

In the infantry every man is provided with the best possible rifle at the national cost. He retains this weapon himself and keeps it in order. Ample opportunity is afforded him for becoming expert in its use, and many rifle competitions of individuals and squads are held to encourage cool and accurate shooting throughout the army. The uniforms provided for the troops are worn only when engaged in actual training. At ordinary gatherings and places of amusement civil dress is worn. Leave is granted during the service period in order that all ranks may be able to vote or perform any necessary civil duty. In this way the soldier never at any time loses touch with the citizen, while his military training obliges him to keep himself well qualified to fulfil his duties when called upon. Though this Swiss army has not been tried in modern war, there is every reason to believe it will

acquit itself admirably should the necessity arise. Certain it is that if longer and more continuous training is required, this will be voted for and enacted. The whole population is directly interested in securing the highest personal efficiency as well as in providing the most perfect and adequate supply of equipment, material, and munitions.

I do not claim that this Swiss system can be applied forthwith to the reorganization and extension of our own army, but I do say emphatically that, if Great Britain is to take her fair share on land in the present war, and to be able under democratic forms to defend these shores and be true to her Treaty pledges, some modification of the Swiss plan of compulsory training must be adopted. Not being an Imperialist, in the sense of wishing to keep under our domination peoples who would be glad to dispense with our rule, I leave it to others to say how (and why) the European army in India is to be kept up. As India pays the whole expense, including that of the dépôts at home, it might be as well to confer with capable Indians on that point. But for home, and even for Continental, service a democratic citizen army appears to me an immediate necessity if volunteering is really insufficient, Conscription

being obnoxious to our entire working class. The absorption of our existing troops into the new organization would present little difficulty, and they would probably welcome it if proper care were taken to secure them from unemployment on the declaration of peace.

The main trouble under any method of compulsory training whatever would arise from the unsatisfactory physical status of large portions of our industrial population, which renders it impossible for them to become effective soldiers within any reasonable period. But in the interest of the future of the nation it is imperative that the truth with reference to this should be made known as speedily as possible, and vigorous steps taken to remedy the terrible social conditions which produce such deplorable results. In this respect we are on a lower plane than any other country in Europe. The first necessity for the creation of a powerful democratic citizen army is the provision of educated democrats and physically capable citizens.

CHAPTER VII

MARXISM AND THE FUTURE

FOR many years the New, like the Old, "International" has suffered from the dictation of the German Social-Democrats and their special friends from Austria, Holland, and Scandinavia. Time after time they have postponed the holding of this or that international Socialist Congress because the date fixed by other nationalities did not suit their own domestic convenience. Nobody admired more than I the education, loyalty, self-sacrifice and discipline of the German Social-Democrats in their national policy and tactics; no one has written and spoken in more laudatory terms of their party and their organization as a whole; nevertheless, they and their friends carried things with such a high hand on the International Socialist Bureau, and treated the whole movement so much as if it were dependent on them, that on one occasion I suggested that *nous autres pauvres apôtres* of the rest of

the civilized world should, for once, hold an independent Socialist Congress of our own.

At another time really important affairs were neglected so completely, and so many hours were wasted on petty details of little real significance, that Keir Hardie and myself, who often differed on other matters, retired from the sitting, after frequently and vigorously protesting to no purpose against the restriction of discussion to business which had only interest for the German peoples. German predominance had even then—some years ago—become a nuisance and a danger. We kept silence, even from good words, in order to preserve the international unity of the party, and not to give an opening for ridicule to the enemy without ; in order, also, to avoid weakening in any way the power of the German Social-Democrats themselves in their bitter struggle against the enemy within.

Now these reasons for reticence no longer exist. The German Social-Democratic Party has had the most glorious opportunity that ever fell to the lot of any people for putting Socialism and working - class international fraternity nobly before mankind. Millions of Socialists all over the civilized world looked to them for a lead. They were not asked

to risk life or limb for the cause ; they were not expected even to vote directly, as a party, against the credits demanded by their Government in order to pay for a war of aggression. We only hoped that they would abstain from giving by their vote the support of the German Social-Democracy to the militarist caste which, holding Germany in its grip, had resolved to make war upon Europe ; and we likewise expected that they would fully expound the reasons for their action. They themselves have abdicated the leadership which they had previously claimed.

Some writers have asserted that, if the original ideas of Marx had held their ground, and the German Social-Democrats had been guided by them, their party could have stopped the war. This I entirely deny. They had no power to do anything of the kind. If the whole of the hundred and eleven Social-Democratic Deputies in the Reichstag had voted against the war credits this would not have checked the war for a day. Had they called upon Social-Democrats to resist mobilization by force, or to attempt a general strike, these efforts would have been alike costly and futile. A few noble spirits might have gone forward as martyrs in the cause. But these few would have been butchered mercilessly, under martial

law, and the whole party, crushed with relentless military severity.

The Party in the Reichstag, and as represented by its Executive, was a Marxist party. True, these same Marxists had done some very foolish things. For example, they voted for the admission of the British Labour Party to the International Socialist Bureau and International Socialist Congress, though these British representatives pronounced against Socialism and had no definite programme either for political or social action. The chief German theorist, Karl Kautsky, even contended that the British Labourists, though they were avowed anti-Socialists and refused to recognize the class war, must of necessity be revolutionists at heart without knowing it. Trade unions, however mild their methods or ineffective their tactics, could not, he argued, fail to fight the class fight, and should therefore be admitted without challenge to the same rights and privileges as ourselves. In vain did Madame Roussel, the Guesdist, point out that this was a return to the succession of weak and injurious compromises which had done so much harm at the earlier International Socialist Congresses, and was thus a reactionary rather than a progressive policy. Kautsky, and his majority, all of them placed two deaf ears

at the service of the eminent Socialist Frenchwoman. So the facts went by the board and the philosophic illusionists had their will of us.

But all this precisely accorded with the "practical" policy of Karl Marx himself, in the early period of his propaganda. In his *Misère de la Philosophie* (written in 1847 in opposition to Proudhon's *Philosophie de la Misère*) Marx expressed the sanguine hope that the development of Trade Unionism, at the Trade Union Congress held in that year, betokened the commencement of an important revolutionary uprising in Great Britain. It did nothing of the kind. The great Chartist movement was even then approaching its final downfall. The abler leaders of that movement, and in particular Bronterre O'Brien, saw much more clearly than Marx what the growth of Trade Unionism meant at that juncture, and warned the people that the constitution of an "aristocracy of labour," divorced from the main body of the proletariat, must inevitably act as a bulwark to capitalism, prevent the establishment of a really subversive proletarian organization, and retard the emancipation of the wage-slave class.

Even Marx's residence in England, up to 1864, had not cured him of this delusion about the tendency of Trade Unionism at that

time. So far as England was concerned, the old "International" was based upon Trade Unionism, not upon Revolutionary Socialism. The first meeting, held in London in 1864, at which the eminent Positivist, Professor Edward Spencer Beesly, took the chair, was in the main a Trade Union gathering, and old members of that organization still living bear out the truth of what I say, even if the names and positions of the English members—Cremer, Bailey, Applegarth, and others—did not of themselves prove this.

How right O'Brien was and how wrong Marx has long been clearly apparent. The Trade Unions *have* acted as a bulwark of capitalism. Their leading members in the House of Commons, by entering into close alliance with the Liberal Party, *have* headed back Revolutionary Socialism and helped to retard the emancipation of the entire wage-slave class for two full generations, as the Chartists predicted they would. A change has taken place since the war, but the more vigorous policy still makes way very slowly.

The truth is that Marx who, in theory, was a thorough-going revolutionist, and, in practice, a revolutionist and supporter of revolution, wherever he could act in that capacity, comprehended more fully than many of his

followers that the greatest social transformation of all time, from capitalist competition and production for profit to Socialist co-operation and production for use, must of necessity be a slow process. Therefore, in his anxiety to keep in touch with the organized forces of labour he ceased at times to be a theorist merely, and became in some degree an adherent of compromise. Even the famous Communist Manifesto (written in co-operation with Engels) which gives, more succinctly than any other work, his survey of history, as a record of economic antagonisms and class wars, formulated in its early editions a series of palliative measures, leading, under capitalism, to a better state of things.

It has been stated that Marx's teachings were of an anarchist and subversive character. Subversive, most certainly. Anarchist, not at all. It is impossible, argued Marx, to imagine that a society, based upon wage-slavery for the bulk of the population, can be developed into the new period without subversion. But he was none the less throughout his life engaged in continuous and bitter strife against anarchy and all that is anarchical. Individualist "propaganda of deed," violent half-organized efforts to bring about a sudden change, attacks for attacking's sake, nowhere

found a more strenuous opponent than in the author of *Das Kapital*. Marx accused the Anarchists of dense ignorance of history and sociology, as well as of futile addiction to sentimental homicide. To him their theories were as fatuous as their practices were reactionary.

No one ever discriminated more clearly than Marx did between revolt and revolution. "No man, and no body of men, can make a revolution. No man, and no body of men, can crush a revolution when it is engendered in the womb of society." At the time when Marx began to write, and for many a long year after, *bourgeois* ideas were universally dominant and the peace of the profit-monger prevailed in the land. Having obtained control of Western society by economic development, supported by their own organized force, the *bourgeoisie* were satisfied. Further use of force, being for them unnecessary, was not only improper but criminal.

They had completely legalized the position of the capitalists and profit-makers; the aristocracy and the landowners were quite content to share their gains; while the wage-earners, the actual producers, were their nominally free but actually very obedient humble servants. *Bourgeois* property was secure, proletarian labour-

power was cheap ; people could say pretty much what they liked, so long as they contented themselves with only saying it. Most of the wage-earners could even vote if they chose. All grounds for the use of force were therefore removed, from the *bourgeois* point of view. National uprisings against racial domination they might sympathize with—Mazzini, Kossuth, Garibaldi, Langiewicz were fine fellows: class uprisings against capitalist “organization” were detestable and infamous—the physical-force Chartists, Blanqui, Raspail, and Socialists of every hue, including Marx himself and his associates, were mere up-setters for destruction’s sake.

At such a period of plutocratic and pecuniary self-complacency it was natural that Marx should point out, and even dilate upon, the truths that force had been “the midwife of progress, delivering the old society pregnant with the new,” and that it was certain to be so again ; that history did not end with the consolidation and legalization of *bourgeois* supremacy ; that, even under the forms of peace, force was constantly used by the capitalist class to repress unorganized revolt against what seemed to the people ordered injustice ; and that the time would assuredly come when the disinherited majority would in

turn strive for mastery, urged thereto by the hopelessness of securing their own well-being under the specious but oppressive forms of pecuniary domination. No intelligent man to-day will dispute that this is a sound view of the situation, or assert that capitalism spells the last word in the annals of the human race. But sixty, fifty, even forty years ago this was not so. The "intellectuals" were, for the greater part, incapable of understanding that the status of individualism which then pervaded the atmosphere of thought was, by existing economic conditions, rendered unattainable for the vast majority of mankind. Marx, therefore, was more than justified in systematizing and giving a scientific sociologic basis to the teachings of the Chartists, and pointing out that force had still its revolutionary uses. Yet he knew better than they did that, though force would probably be attendant upon social revolution, it could not by any possibility produce a revolution by itself.

In my own conversations with him, Marx was always clearly and strongly in favour of Socialists entering the political arena as Socialists on this point. He thought it probable that a powerful Socialist Party would eventually appear on the floor of the House of Commons—(which reads sadly to Socialists to-

day)—and cited this as one of the reasons why “England is the one country where a peaceful revolution is possible—though history does not tell us so.” The French Guesdists, the greatest sticklers in Europe for the pure faith of Marxism, have invariably used political methods wherever they have had the slightest chance of success, and even where they had not. The endeavour to capture the political machine by representation, or at least to hamper its smooth action in favour of capitalism, has been advocated persistently by the Marxist in every country, as the easiest and most effective way of making propaganda for their revolutionary principles.

Marx contended that capital would accrete into larger and larger masses ; that the wage-earning class would become more and more numerous in proportion to the possessing class ; that the wage-earners would obtain a less and less share of the total national wealth in every country ; and that discontent would become more and more widespread as the workers better understood the inevitable class war under capitalism, and comprehended the conditions under which they were toiling for the benefit of others. Bernstein, in his “Evolutionary Socialism,” disputed and denied all this. Upon this denial was based the programme of reform

instead of revolution ; of co-operation with liberal capitalism in place of relentless opposition to all political factions of the dominant class, of a general sober palliative movement, instead of a persistent active effort of the workers towards the great goal of Socialism.

These views spread to other countries, and hampered the Socialists much more there than in Germany itself. Bernstein was the founder and father of all this. He remained up to March last, in spite of discouragement, defeat, and personal detraction, its ablest and most persistent exponent. Then, as already said, he abjured his heresies completely. Not because he foresaw the forthcoming war, but because twenty years' experience of facts had irresistibly taught him that Marx was right and he wrong. Kautsky summed up the position thus: "Bernstein acknowledges that all the important doctrines of Marxism are true: the Materialist Conception of History, the Theory of Surplus Value, the Concentration of Capitals, the Approaching Downfall of Capitalism, the Class War and its Increasing Bitterness."

The vast development of anti-militarist Marxism throughout Germany, in the form of Social-Democracy, was one of the main causes of the present war ; for it engendered

in the minds of the Junkers the fear that it would prove still more threatening in the near future. That Bebel supported the creation of a Democratic Citizen Army was, as I have shown elsewhere, no contravention at all of his Marxism. Far from it. It was, on the contrary, a reaffirmation of an important portion of the Marxist programme. At every International Socialist Congress, from 1900 onwards, Marxists, with Socialists of all shades of opinion, have voted unanimously in favour of the establishment of such a Citizen Army, with officers of proved capacity, elected by the rank and file, as the only effective means of upholding national independence against aggression from without and militarism within. I myself have advocated such a Citizen Army in Great Britain, first as Radical and then as Social-Democrat, for more than forty years. And, oddly enough, I learnt to appreciate its value directly from one of Marx's most vehement opponents—Giuseppe Mazzini. Would it indeed be a great drawback to British democracy if we had a genuinely well-trained and well-equipped National Citizen Army, under the control of the people, in this island to-day?

The old "International" came to an end in 1872, and was not revived in any defi-

nite shape until 1900 ; though a fissiparous attempt at reconstruction was made in 1889. After only fourteen, or, at the outside, twenty-five years of more or less solid and recognized existence as an international creed and party, we Socialists, without money, official power, or social position, are told that we have failed and that our Socialism has "collapsed" because we did not convince and dominate Europe and decree peace on earth and goodwill among men ! Well, well ; I am usually considered an optimist, but I confess to my shame, as an expert in making *bonne mine au mauvais jeu*, that I never at any period of my career as a Social-Democratic educator and agitator took such an exalted view of our capacity.

Why, here is the Catholic Church alone, with 1850 years or so of tradition behind it ; with millions of believers in every nation and on every continent ; with an international organization of unequalled strength ; with tens of thousands of celibate priests and hundreds of thousands of fanatical devotees all over the world ; and with vast resources at the disposal of an ecclesiastical autocrat who has the power to bind and loose for all eternity—here is this vast institution wholly unable to obtain a truce of God for Christmas, even with

the support of other forms of its own creed !

Yet we Socialists, whose international organization (if organization it could be called) really did collapse in 1872, and is anyhow but a child of yesterday, are blamed for not achieving, after half a century of tentative effort, what the followers of Christ have been wholly unable to accomplish by centuries of intellectual domination in Europe ! Because the leaders of one great Socialist section have failed to act up to their principles, therefore all our economic analysis must be abandoned as illusory, all our historical investigations, which have cast light for the first time on many dark places in the record of humanity, must be thrown on the scrap-heap ; and even all the facts which support and confirm our theories must, I suppose, be turned to a contrary purpose !

But Socialists do not for one moment accept any of these categorical imperatives. The views of Marx, far less modified by time than those of Darwin, will be upheld by nearly all the delegates at International Socialist Congresses after the war as they were before it. We have no need to search for a new system of political economy, to set on foot a fresh exposition of human history, nor to substitute

a revised synthesis for that which we accepted prior to the outbreak of hostilities. The hopes rather than anticipations expressed at the great Socialist Peace Congress of Basle have not been realized. The protests which were there formulated under German leadership have evaporated in the heat of the unprecedented conflict provoked by German ambition. The spirit of militarist nationalism has, for the time being, obscured the ideal of International Socialism. This we admit. But so far is Socialism from having collapsed that already efforts—premature efforts though I hold them to be—are being made in every civilized country to renew our organization when the war shall be past. Socialism is no more destroyed by the temporary recrudescence of national antagonisms than representative government was crushed when Cromwell decamped with the mace and locked the doors of the House of Commons, or when Napoleon the Great (or, for that matter, Napoleon the Little) proclaimed himself Emperor of the French. Those who imagine that the result of the present war will be to re-establish permanently the old national distrust and hatred, quite misread the signs of the times.

For the industrial evolution of humanity may

be checked, but cannot be definitely arrested by the mutual slaughter of human beings. When the fighting ceases, progress goes forward from the point where peaceful development was interrupted. Nay, it is even possible that war may accelerate the rate of such progress. In Great Britain as we have seen (while still nominally maintaining the figment of a free competition) the Class-State takes control of department after department, as in the case of the railways, uses the national credit to save the monopolist banks from default, to maintain the honour of the great commercial houses, to guarantee financial issues in order to foster national industries, to regulate prices by enactment, to fling aside the doctrine of buying in the cheapest market, and to increase the State provision for soldiers and their dependents to an extent hitherto unheard-of and likely to be still further enlarged. True, most of these collectivist measures have so far been directed to the strengthening or buttressing the more capitalist organizations. But will not the workers, whose combinations are simultaneously drawing closer and closer together, on a larger and larger scale, recognize that a State authority, which can thus be used in war to safeguard and benefit banks, financiers, merchants, and even branches of industry, in order

to uphold the competitive system favoured by the master class, might be far better applied to inaugurate a system of national co-operation which would emancipate the working class? When upwards of £1,000,000,000 are raised almost without comment for the purposes of war, will it be possible for the most cheese-paring Chancellor of the Exchequer to ask effectively, "Where is the money to come from?" when the people call on him to expend a much larger sum for the higher purposes of peace? The questions answer themselves.

In France a similar development is proceeding, and what makes it more noteworthy is the fact that several members of the present French Ministry are ex-Socialists or Socialists, two of whom made very important stipulations before they took office. And what will happen in Belgium after the complete defeat and withdrawal of the Germans? Manifestly, only a national democratic administration, with that thorough-going Socialist, Emile Vandervelde, as a prominent Minister within, or more than a Minister without, supported by the great Socialist co-operative institutions, will be able to reorganize peacefully Belgian industry and transport. Even in Germany, after the downfall of militarist Junkerdom, where can we look

for reconstructive forces, outside the Social-Democracy and the great trade unions, able to dominate the vast trusts and combines on the one side, and to enlist the workers of the Fatherland in the vast enfranchised army of industry on the other?

That which Marx foresaw and predicted is being fulfilled and verified under our eyes. From small competitive production and petty pecuniary relations to the great factory industry, limited companies, vast exchange and transport, and divorce of workers from control over their own tools ; from the great factory industry, with its increasing proletariat and enlarging area of distribution, to trusts, combines, monopolies, international capitalism, accompanied by the permanent wage-slavery of the mass of the population ; from this period of capitalist monopoly, attended throughout by ever-growing combinations of the toilers, and constantly increasing recognition of the inevitable class war, to the introduction of State and municipal control, and extension of State and municipal employment under bureaucratic management, with wage-slavery still maintained, but class antagonism growing steadily more bitter and finding slowly political expression ; from collectivist wagedom with mild political protest and unconscious revolt, to national and inter-

national co-operation and Social-Democracy, by the conquest of political power and the transformation of competitive production for class profit into general co-operative production for Socialist and communal use.¹

That this transcendent revolution shall be accomplished without passing through a period of internecine bloodshed and wholesale civil war, beside which even the present vast conflict will seem child's play, calls for two conditions: A stage of human development in which the co-ordination of co-operative production on a large scale is possible; the education of competing wage-earners to the point where they can understand, and, having understood, can handle and control the economic and social growth going on around them of which they themselves form a part. It was Marx's opinion that this must of necessity be a very slow process, even in the

¹ The power of man over nature has increased and is increasing so rapidly that there is no difficulty whatever as to the creation of wealth. In fact, mankind in the highly-civilized countries is overmastered by its own machinery and capacity for production. Wealth may indeed be made as plentiful as water by co-operative effort. Only the fetishism of money bemuses the mind and prevents the workers from understanding the truth. In Western Europe the economic development has proceeded so far that only education is needed to enable the transformation to be made. (Force cannot much longer be used as the abortionist of reaction.)

most advanced countries. His arguments compelled me many years ago to adopt his views.¹

But since then events have occurred which lead me to take a more hopeful view of the rapidity with which we may attain our end. In particular, what has happened in Japan may well make us sanguine. Scarcely more than forty years have passed since Sir Rutherford Alcock referred to the Japanese as "highly intelligent children," and spoke of their feudal system, their class gradations, consolidated by a fine religion, as likely to last for many a day. Within that short term Japan has passed through an economic, social, and political evolution which Europe took four hundred years to accomplish.

Capitalism in Japan has now reached almost the same level that it has in Europe and America. The great factory industry is growing daily, State and municipal loans have been raised to an excessive amount, banks are be-

¹ Marx himself was inclined rather to extend than to reduce the period required to realize Socialism in any practical shape. I remember well that, in one conversation with him at Maitland Park Crescent, I expressed myself as being impatient at the intolerable delay which would occur before an effective change could be brought about in our horrible capitalist and wage-slave society. He replied: "When you have been impatient as many years as I have, you will begin to be patient then."

coming more and more powerful, great shipping lines are competing on equal terms with European ventures, even trusts and combines are beginning to develop. The hopes entertained by some of us that Japan, learning by the experience of Europe, would restrict and control the power of pecuniary domination have, unfortunately, proved false. But the protest of Socialism is being raised in earnest, in spite of the bitterest injustice and persecution, and there is no doubt that our opinions will steadily make way. In the much more difficult field of China, too, Socialism has its word to say. Is it not certain, therefore, that Socialism, even among the slow-moving populations of the East, will spread much more rapidly than seemed in the least likely even twenty years ago?

Every improvement in international communications and transport facilities cannot but tend to the expansion of international capitalism, both financial and industrial, with the simultaneous growth of trusts and monopolies, all over the world. But international capitalism is now everywhere being accompanied and attacked by international Socialism. This is more apparent by far to-day than it was yesterday, and the advance cannot fail to be still more marked to-morrow than it is to-day.

For against the sinister international capitalist power in peace, as against the belated national antagonisms which lead to war, there is but one effective means of resistance: the solidarity of the workers of all countries, who have no interest either in the peaceful maintenance of capitalism, or in the forceful expansion of competitive industry and commerce.

But such solidarity can only be achieved by thorough comprehension of the world-wide economic situation, and the acceptance of the ideals and religion of Socialism, which, beginning of necessity with national material issues, will gradually, for the first time in history, free all mankind for the highest tasks and the noblest emulation in every department of science, literature, and art. The school of Marx will take the lead in this high endeavour even more completely in the future than it has in the past. The reason for this is that Marxists alone possess the key to the complex historic, economic, and social evolution which leads to the new period. We do not claim any vain infallibility, or lay down a doctrinaire programme of inevitable development. Our work is to take account, consciously and capably, of the events which are occurring under our eyes; using and

adapting the theories of a great genius to stages of human development the full details of which he claimed neither to foresee nor to predict.

Thus, then, when peace is at last proclaimed and the greatest International Socialist Congress the world has ever seen meets in the fine hall of the Maison du Peuple at Brussels, all the delegates present will feel that they, and the millions of Socialists they represent, are entering with greater certainty than ever upon the conquest of the future for the workers of the world. As we rise and take off our hats to the undaunted Belgians who, having sacrificed their all to save Europe from the barbarians, return, like the Athenians from Salamis, far stronger from the sea; as we record our admiration for the courageous minority of German Socialists who never despaired of the cause even in the darkest hour of militarist tyranny, we shall feel, every one of us, that our comrades have not suffered in vain. Thanks to their services, International Social-Democracy will use the lessons taught by the horrors of war to secure for coming generations the permanent blessings of co-operation and peace.

CONCLUSION

THE changes which are going on around us proceed so rapidly that even the most observant can scarcely keep pace with them or appreciate their significance.

The demand for troops, on a scale wholly unknown in all our long and stirring history, accompanied by an expenditure as colossal as the struggle itself is unprecedented, has already crucially modified our political and social life. The England of to-day is quite a different country from the England of a year ago. Up to August 1914 we were living under conditions which, we can now see, made us unfit to cope successfully with any sudden emergency. On the one hand, competitive capitalism, tempered by monopoly and bureaucratic interference, was quite unequal to the situation created by highly-organized militarist aggression ; on the other, International Social-Democracy was not by any means ready to

play the part which sentimental idealists, and even some politicians, were sanguine enough to believe it might play in the preservation of peace.

As a consequence, not England alone, but all the nations engaged in the war, whatever their stage of economic development, are now acting under a system of State Collectivism. This Collectivism in Great Britain is ill-considered and ineffective, because our rulers themselves had no previous conception of the form the transition organization must take. Their hand-to-mouth methods, which barely sufficed in quiet times, were precisely those least adapted to deal effectively and safely with a period of turmoil. Nevertheless, the inchoate State Socialism which has come upon us, unconsciously and unintentionally, is an inevitable step towards organized Social-Democracy. The assertion of the rights of the whole community to control the actions of individuals and to limit freedom in many directions, in order to ensure efficiency, and with efficiency success, is not a mere passing attempt to bring order out of chaos. There is no going back on these great social experiments. What has been forced upon the nation, as a temporary expedient in a time of stress and strain, will be carried to complete fruition, so soon as

the people comprehend what has been done and how they themselves have the power to turn the new jobbing bureaucratic domination to their own advantage.

The mass of our people when the war began were ignorant, unorganized, undisciplined, physically untrained, apathetic and indifferent. Their children were growing up like themselves. Great numbers of ill-paid wage-earners were living under such deplorable social conditions that they were and are quite unfit to supply soldiers for the army, or thoroughly efficient men and women for industry. But now the exigencies of war have done much in a year to make the physically capable more vigorous, in body and in mind, and to teach them the advantage of disciplined co-operation. It is not a lesson they are likely to forget. But it will take at least a generation to replace the etiolated millions of our populace by sound men and women. So with education.

This important matter, studiously neglected by our dominant class, cannot possibly be put right in a hurry. The penalty of leaving the people ignorant, in order to keep them enslaved, may yet have to be paid in very ugly fashion. But meanwhile we must recognize that economy in *this* direction will only be most extravagant waste. Also, every day

that passes which permits the rearing of rickety children, without State or Municipal intervention to secure to them good food and good health, is direct treachery on the part of our rulers to the nation at large.

War, I say, is teaching us much. But we have had to learn in a terrible school, and our lessons have but just begun.

What a different position we should have been in from the commencement had the unceasing warnings of Social-Democrats for the past generation been listened to and acted upon! Instead of clamouring wildly, at the last moment, for hundreds of thousands and even millions of untrained men (most of whom we could neither arm nor equip for months upon months) a National-Democratic Citizen Army of at least 5,000,000 of stalwart soldiers, physically fit, militarily equipped and personally capable, would at once have stepped forward; as ready as our sailors were to deal with any enemy they might have to encounter. We should, even under Capitalism, have been able to reckon upon a large organized body of men and women who knew their duty to the State both as citizens and as soldiers, and were ready to perform it. The proportional work of non-combatants, in preparing supplies and munitions, would at once have

been determined. We should have had large quantities of wheat stored in National Magazines and a supply of metals sufficient for any emergency. But now, after more than twelve months of such warfare as the world has never seen, entailing upon ourselves alone the loss of 400,000 men and the expenditure of a thousand millions of money, we are still far from the point we should have reached within a quarter of the time, had Socialist counsels been adopted. Had our Government even listened to such advice after the war broke out, our industrial position would have been infinitely more satisfactory. By taking over large supplies of wheat, food and raw material (as we vainly suggested) early in the autumn, the Government would have kept down prices and provided useful employment in every department instead of calling upon the nation to raise huge sums in charity, which have, so far, proved a temptation to bureaucrats, and little more. Such foresight, gauged even by the pitiful *bourgeois* standard of hand-to-mouth cheapness, would not only have saved tens upon tens of millions sterling in hard cash, but would have averted the great fall in national credit and the collapse in the price of high-class securities all down the list. Even the despotic methods of Prussia, which

we rightly detest and are fighting to overthrow, are less costly in every way than the anarchical profiteering of which *we* have been and are still the victims.¹

The ineffective national control we have so far secured has also been obtained at an inordinate price to the workers, who, under the impulse of patriotism, have handed over their few liberties and privileges wholesale to the ruling classes. Now they suspect that they are being used, under the State, to secure larger profits for private employers; but this suspicion only leads to spasmodic disorder, not organized resistance.

Similarly, let us assume that railways and shipping had really become the property of the nation. We should at least have avoided the ruinous floundering which occurred in the autumn and winter of 1914, by considering the requirements of the nation and the workers before the dividends of shareholders and the freights and profits of private owners. We should not have left hundreds of thousands of tons of coal blocked in trucks on the railway sidings to assist certain secret dealings

¹ The Government, through one of its innumerable, inefficient, and procrastinating committees, has lately urged upon the country precisely the same suggestion which had been made to them and discarded with contempt twelve months before. Thus was a whole year of preparation cut to waste.

between the mine-owners and the London markets, nor would shipping freights have been inflated to a preposterous height.

Agriculture likewise. There, too, had the demands of Social-Democrats been listened to during the past thirty-five years the most important of all national industries would have been regarded as a matter demanding the ablest possible national control and organization. Had the pasture land as well as the private pleasure-lands and waste lands of England been even partially put under arable cultivation at the beginning of the war (as we suggested) with Government assistance and control, we should by now have had a better prospect for the future; and, what is more important, we should have made a start in that increase of home production, which is becoming a necessity of our national life. But the rulers still looked at the whole industry from the point of view of private ownership, personal rent, and individual profit and—we see the result. The nation has had to pay excessively in every direction, while half-hearted and so far wholly unsuccessful attempts are being made to remedy the blunders of the past. Unfortunately, every step, even when taken on collectivist lines, is guided by men who are by no means anxious to ensure the

success of their own efforts. How should they be? Custom, self-interest, and their natural habit of thought bind them to the system which is passing away.

Thus the bed-rock contention of Social-Democrats—that only collective organization can remedy competitive anarchy—is being verified under our eyes; but neither the nation nor the Government realize how far they must go before a solid superstructure can be raised on the basis of a sound system of national co-operation.

Yet, unless the country at large makes up its mind to look facts in the face during the war, and to prepare for the inevitable economic and social reconstruction after the war, Lord Loreburn's anticipations of revolution, and revolution of a very serious character, are more likely to be realized here than anywhere else. In this emergency the people have a right to expect a clear and statesmanlike lead from their rulers, who have been trusted by them as no administrators have ever been trusted before. At present there is no sign of any such lead. Politicians brought up in our miserable system of party place-hunting and factious intrigue (who belong also to the class directly interested in keeping things as they stand) are incapable of the high states-

manship imperatively demanded by the present crisis. Not even the implicit confidence they have received can call forth an adequate response or even a straightforward statement from our Coalition Government. All the sacrifices of liberty, life, and money, have been made in vain. No great policy is set forth for time of war: no sound domestic proposals are foreshadowed for time of peace.

We are all determined to win. The last militarist caste and the most formidable aggressive power in the world must be beaten. Great Britain has fulfilled her pledges to her Allies many times over. But the cost to us of final victory cannot be less than a million or a million and a half of killed and wounded and £2,000,000,000 of expenditure. It is this last huge mass of indebtedness, with the pensions and allowances that must be paid, which will change our whole national financial outlook, whether we like it or not. The addition to the payments to be made under the Budget will not fall short of £150,000,000 a year, and even these unparalleled figures may be exceeded, before a permanent settlement has been arrived at. How is a yearly charge approaching £400,000,000, including a great additional expenditure, and interest on the National Debt,

to be met without reducing the whole island to bankruptcy? That is the question. That is the problem we have to solve.

To recommend economy and to enjoin thrift are counsels which, by themselves, are quite inadequate. Thrift does not increase wealth: economy by itself does not enhance production.

Whenever, in years gone by, we have demanded that the interests of the producing class should be sedulously attended to and home production organized and extended, even under capitalism, what is the answer we have invariably received? "Where is the money to come from?" Let *all* children we said be well-fed, well-clothed, well-housed, well-trained, well-cared-for. Children are the most valuable asset of the nation. Upon them, upon their health, vigour, character, and capacity depend the well-being of our country, and the future of our race. "Where is the money to come from?" Let these slums, in which millions of our people pig together and fester in their wretched and unwholesome penury, be swept away for ever, and let homes for the citizens of Great Britain be provided with garden land around them and healthy surroundings secured for all. "Where is the money to come from?" Let the railways become truly public

property, with free transport at cost for goods and passengers, thus sweeping away at a blow the protection in favour of the foreigner already denounced. "Where is the money to come from?" Let motor roads be run through the whole country with public services on the same lines. "Where is the money to come from?" So the fatuous answer to all demand for improvement was repeated again and again.

The fetishism of money bemused our intelligence; the Mammon-God of profit crushed down our souls. Profiteers and producers, idlers and workers, capitalists and labourers, landlords, and proletaires were all degraded in their minds and stupefied in their imaginations by the fallacious illusions of the cash-book, the ledger, and the balance at the Bank.

But now that the nation is spending on a ruinous war the full amount that would have sufficed to carry out the completest reorganization in peace—what will be the new retort of the reactionists and obscurantists when the Social-Democrats again declare that the interests of the whole people shall be dealt with as the one great national need? "We have spent so much on the war that we"—who are the "we"?—"must have time to recover."

Now is the time, therefore, to say plainly

to the rich few and to the poverty-stricken many that the day of paltry subterfuges has gone by. The production of all wealth is due to labour applied to natural objects, with the aid of the tools and machines which have been created by labour, and social discovery, and invention. Labour and labour and labour again. It is for the workers to organize their labour and to develop their resources, regardless of the landlords and the capitalists who for generations have preyed upon the people.

Unfortunately, those who suffer under our present system are as ready to uphold it as those whom it enriches. But the soldiers who return from the Front after hard-won victories will not be the dull subservient wage-slaves who went forth to fight for the country of which they owned no part. Already the Government of the capitalists and their lawyers, who have proved themselves incompetent in every part of the Empire—save where our navy and the democratic Citizen Soldierly of South Africa conducted their own campaigns—already the Government has been forced to surrender at discretion to the demands of the miners under the menace of Civil War. The 250,000 miners with the Colours had their own views as to how the War Munitions Act should be worked in South Wales. So the miners of

South Wales won all along the line. And this is but the first step in the organization of the workers for victory at home, as their mates have fought for victory abroad.

We have I say entered upon a new period. This may be summed up as the transformation from production for profit to production for use ; from distribution of commodities according to riches to distribution of wealth according to needs. In no other way, than this can we proceed. Necessarily this involves a complete alteration in the view of private property. *Even as matters stand to-day the English Common Law does not permit or recognize any ownership as indefeasible. Where such ownership is opposed to public interest, or stands in the way of necessary public improvement, it is at once swept aside. Compensation itself as against the community is accorded as a convenience not admitted as a right.*

And this applies to every form of property : to the fields as well as to the factories, to mines as well as to water-courses, to shipping as well as to railways. If private ownership, therefore, obstructs, as it must and will obstruct, increased production for the common use after the war, such ownership will have to go the way of feudal rights and feudal dues alike in country and in town.

The Government and the Municipalities are by far the largest employers of labour in the United Kingdom. But the remuneration of their labourers, however skilled they may be, takes the form of a competitive wage, and these workers have no equal rights with all citizens to share in the wealth which is socially produced by them as *social* wealth. The spread of the conception of general co-operation, under the Democratic State, will speedily alter these relations, and in this development the great democratic Co-operative Societies, which even now supply one quarter of the population, ought to be able to take a very useful part. The fact that at present their customers are bound by the attraction of the dividend to this form of trading will not long prevent them from launching out far more widely and successfully into production on a large scale, alike in agriculture, in general manufacture and in mining. Here is a means whereby the employees of the State and the Municipalities and the returned soldiers might pass, together with the members of these co-operative bodies, from the competitive to the co-operative stage of our general society; while the general community might proceed on parallel lines to the same end.

(We have had conclusive proof during the

war that any nation which allows itself to become exclusively dependent on countries outside of its own control for necessities of life and industry, to an extent beyond that which is absolutely inevitable, places its whole existence in jeopardy, so long as national rivalries and national competition exist. Perfect Free Trade can only be realized under universal peace and international Socialism. In the intermediate period, each nation, small or large, must do its utmost to develop its own resources. There is no absolute economic truth either in any system of tariffs or in the abrogation of all tariffs. Great Britain has fallen behind more than one of her rivals in the world market, not because she ceased to be a protectionist power, but because she has failed to organize her inventions, her industry, her agriculture, her transport, her Government in the interest of the productive and trading fortunes of the community, and has failed to see in time the dangers of this happy-go-lucky policy. It may be necessary, if the competitive system is maintained, to extend protection and State assistance to certain industries which have been allowed by our ignorance and apathy to decay; but this would not in the least militate against our continuous endeavours to substitute national

organization and co-operation for individual profit-making in every department of industry.

Formerly, in common with most Social-Democrats, I held that Social-Democracy could not be realized in practice, until all, or nearly all, civilized countries were ready to proceed on the same or on parallel lines. This is no longer my opinion. I am now convinced that the nation which first adopts democratic, co-operative Socialism, on a complete scale, will not only benefit herself and every one of her citizens, to an extent as yet conceivable only by those who are thorough-going economic Socialists themselves, but will peacefully compel neighbouring countries to follow in her wake. It would be impossible to defeat by arms or competition a country in whose prosperity every inhabitant was vitally interested—a country kept up to the very highest point of efficiency in all new inventions applicable to peace or war.

I hope to see England lead as the successful pioneer in the realization of this great ideal of economic and social emancipation. In 1802 Robert Owen stated that wealth might be made as plentiful as water, by the light and pleasurable industry of all members of the community. How much nearer truth and possibility his words are to-day! Diffi-

culties arise, not from any deficiency in the powers of man over nature to produce more and more wealth, but because the human intellect, as a function of the individual and of society, fails to understand how mankind is overmastered by the traditions of the past, and deprived of control over his own instruments of production in the present. The most stupendous war of all time may well compel us to such mental emancipation as the dethronement of the money fetish and the simultaneous comprehension of the possibilities of national co-operation. Then, in the solution of the greatest social problem of the ages, little remains to be done.

But for this political democracy of the most complete character must be combined with the conscious advance towards social freedom and reorganization. Thus only can a peaceful revolution be brought about and reaction be permanently headed back. Our history is one long record of struggles on the part of the people to obtain the fullest right of self-government. But this has never yet been achieved. Now final success in this direction is more important than ever. A nation which has attained wide political liberties, without, at the same time, winning economic and social control over its own agricultural and industrial

system, has attained but a small fraction of that real freedom for which our forbears fought and fell. Yet this stage we have not reached ; for our political forms (which still fail to give the suffrage to all adults) are quite ludicrously behind the development which the industrial situation demands.

But an organized political democracy, which secures the vote to all men and women, which possesses even the power of Initiative in legislation and the Referendum to the entire people before any enactment can be accepted and obeyed as law—even such a democracy is still incomplete without economic ownership and control. A free man, at the mercy of those who dispose of his means of gaining subsistence, and can regulate, through competition, or the bureaucratic ordinance of the Class-State, the amount of his remuneration, is little better than a chattel slave in disguise. Political voting power, used by the wage-earners as it is used to-day, to give legal sanction to class ownership of property, is no more than a juggle, by which the political free man becomes a consenting party to his own servitude. If also, as already urged, these political institutions are themselves some generations behind the entire social system which they are supposed to represent, then this is

obviously only a pseudo-democracy which must be reorganized as speedily as possible. That is precisely our case. Those also who contend that a democracy of the kind advocated cannot conduct its business affairs unless thoroughly educated are theoretically right. But we have tramped long enough round this vicious circle, and it is certain that the most ignorant democracy could not have more fatuously mismanaged matters in peace and in war than the lawyers and bureaucrats who now have us in their grip.

In short, wherever, as now in Great Britain, the methods of creating and sharing wealth have not only proved injurious to the well-being of the whole people, but have outgrown the political constitution of the country, a revolution has been prepared by the unseen course of events which, peacefully or forcibly, slowly or suddenly, will transform the entire society.

The sooner, therefore, we meet and deal with that powerful current towards Co-ordination and Social-Democracy into which the war has swept us, the greater is our chance of avoiding an anarchical catastrophe.

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